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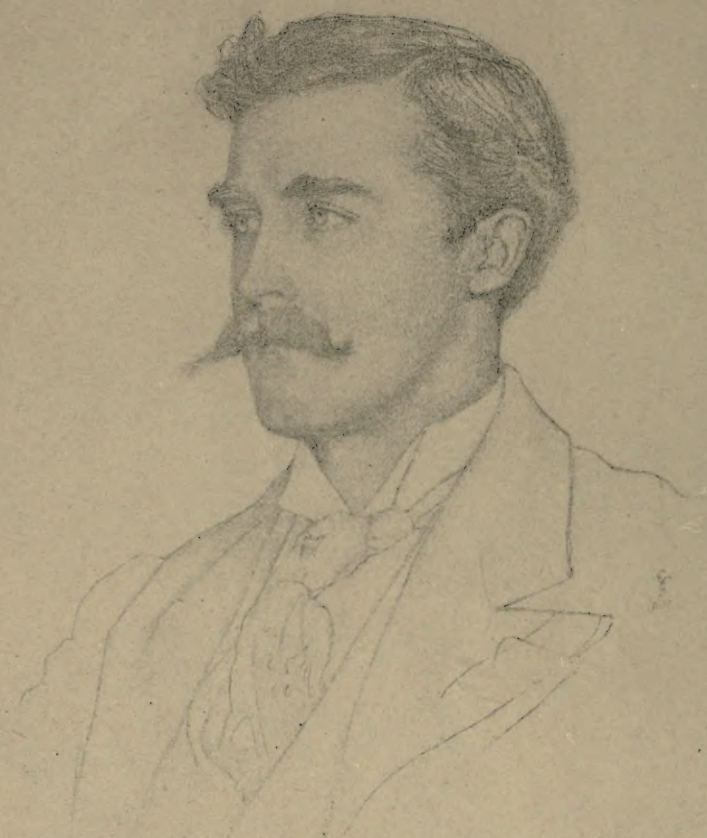
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SOCIAL AND DIPLOMATIC  
MEMORIES, 1884-1893









*The Author in 1894.  
from a pencil drawing by the Duchess of Rutland.*

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~~1885~~  
SOCIAL AND  
DIPLOMATIC MEMORIES  
1884-1893

BY THE RIGHT HON.  
SIR JAMES RENNELL RODD, G.C.B.

WITH PORTRAIT

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LONDON  
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## PREFACE

I have arrived at a time of life when it seems desirable before memory weakens to place on record some of those things which seem worthy of remembrance in a life which has been rich in varied, and perhaps unusual, experiences. I have not only seen history in the making from very advantageous posts of observation, but I have been brought into personal relations with many makers of history themselves and have an ample store of letter-books and of notes written at the moment when events were shaping or when conversations with "certain persons of importance" had just taken place, which it may be best eventually to destroy. On the other hand I have never preserved or taken copies of official documents, nor did I make any notes from them for my diaries.

The sources of these reminiscences have been personal observations and conversations, but they owe to official life the special and exceptional opportunity which it has afforded me of contact with the personalities referred to. All that seems to have a permanent value in my diaries and letters, all that may be handed on without breach of confidence, I hope to include in these pages, which will at least have a value for my children. Many of the appreciations and judgments which I formed in early years, when I endeavoured in my diaries to keep pace with the issues which came under my experience, have needed revision. To some events I am still too near to see them in their proper perspective. I shall therefore avoid as far as possible passing judgment on the actors, and simply set forth the things I have seen and heard with my own eyes and ears as evidence from which those concerned with the story of these times may draw such conclusions as they warrant.

As such a record must inevitably be, to a certain extent, autobiographical, I feel a temptation to begin like Marcus Aurelius with a testimony of gratitude to those from whom I learned important lessons of life. But as such a collective exordium might render me liable to the charge of self-esteem, and suggest the presumption of a claim to have profited by them, it will be safer to refer to such influences in chronological sequence. In glancing through what I have written I notice without dissatisfaction that my appreciations of individuals and their actions are for the most part benevolent. One may estimate the motives and achievements of contemporaries from a generous or from an atrabilious point of view, according to temperament. The sceptic and the iconoclast perhaps appeal to a wider public, but I am not sure that they are really more worthy of credence than the sycophant. My own personal tendency has been, I readily acknowledge, to regard honesty of purpose as the general rule, and not to suspect it until I have had good reason to do so.

With the great war an epoch has closed. Many things which seemed permanent by their nature and unassailable have passed away, and the world will need them no more. For more than a quarter of a century before the close of that epoch my business in life was connected with international relations. I do not maintain that these were always handled with consummate knowledge or ability, but I do consider that an unnecessary amount of facile and unreflecting criticism has been passed on what is called the old diplomacy, which would gladly welcome the publication of its records. In its day a limited number of men who had learned experience in foreign countries and had had every opportunity to study the temperament of other nations, conducted our affairs abroad, and their service, like that of many other public officers in this country, might almost be regarded as an honorary one, inasmuch as, except in the case of heads of missions, their salaries were derisory. From my observation during some thirty-



seven years of diplomatic life I should say that on the whole they kept their Governments very well informed, and that the latter had ample material at hand to guide them in their decisions and previsions. Though our diplomats had little behind them save the remote factor of a powerful fleet, they succeeded in keeping us clear of European war and entanglements for sixty years, and when Great Britain failed to make her influence felt it was not often due to any shortcomings of our representatives abroad. I have repeatedly seen friction avoided by the tact and skill of the professional negotiator in interpreting instructions and waiting upon opportunity. To handle successfully relations with foreign countries, and in our case especially with Latin nations, to know what not to do, and especially when not to do it, requires a special training just as much as navigation or surgery.

Whether a new diplomacy dictated largely by the press and negotiations handled by Ministers inevitably in a hurry in forty-eight hour conferences, the necessity for which in moments of emergency I entirely recognize, are likely to lead to better results and a more cordial spirit in international relations may be open to doubt. Experience rather leads me to see advantage in a buffer, intermediate between the protagonists with whom ultimate decision lies. In any case in our country the interest in foreign questions is far more general than it used to be and to some extent a new diplomacy must take the place of the old.

But I venture to prophesy that the new diplomacy is likely to prove in the long run more costly, more insidious and probably more menacing to a good understanding between the nations. And for this reason. So long as Governments with a definite end in view acted through a skilful accredited agent, his intrigues, if he attempted any, were not difficult for those who knew their business to detect. But the weapon of aggression of the new diplomacy will be a subtle propaganda, a seduction of the organs of publicity often unperceived by its victims, and an elaborate

process of suggestion aimed at misleading the masses which will employ every available weapon of insinuation, falsehood and even simulated sympathy with popular obsessions. There will more than ever be need for the trained observer with experience of the mentality and temperament of other countries. Such weapons of offence will have to be countered by a new armour of defence, and to make it effective is likely to prove a costly process. Meanwhile, instead of preparing for the future we have with the end of the great war closed down every centre of activity abroad which was intended to make the spirit and the ideals of the British people better known in other countries.

In this first volume of reminiscences I have dealt with events of which I was mainly an observer and in the last two chapters only reach a phase in which circumstances enabled me to pass from observation to action. In one chapter, the seventh, I have departed somewhat from the general scheme of the book in describing experiences of travel in Greece more than thirty years ago. The pleasure of recalling memories which are really of personal interest offered an irresistible temptation.

Looking back over what I have written, I am surprised to realize how little after all has seemed of a sufficiently permanent interest to reproduce out of so much that happened in a decade of diplomatic life, so much that appeared to us at the moment to be of grave importance. But even this brief retrospect of the old order and of a life which is rapidly passing away may throw some light on tendencies which shaped the course of events towards issues of great moment, so that these when they came to pass did not altogether astonish those who had studied their antecedents. These chapters are, in any case, an inevitable introduction to the subsequent story which I hope to tell of my long service in Egypt under Lord Cromer, in Stockholm and at Rome, where I spent three years as counsellor and eleven as Ambassador, which last included the convulsive period of the great war.



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# SOCIAL AND DIPLOMATIC MEMORIES, 1884-1893

## CHAPTER I EARLY YEARS

The early years of the average man can offer little that is of interest to other people unless they are treated as a psychological study of the influence of circumstance on character. Such is not my aim, and I shall therefore pass rapidly over a period which was nevertheless intensely interesting to myself.

My first recollections are clouded with the depressing gloom of winter fogs in the interminable lengths of Wimpole Street, where I was born in a house which has now been reconstructed. A little higher up on the other side lived my grandmother, a daughter of a famous geographer, Major Rennell, who having begun life as a sailor became a soldier in the East India Company's service, and was Surveyor-General of Bengal at the age of twenty-five. She was to me a rather awe-inspiring old lady who drove in a yellow coach and was a providence on birthdays. But in Victorian days there was a great gulf fixed between grandparents and grandchildren, and grandmothers did not dance. My father's father I only knew from his portrait in an Admiral's uniform with a red ribbon round his neck.

The first real landmark in my existence was the announcement that we were going to travel, after the majestic old lady had died and the family budget had consequently

somewhat expanded. Up to that period when I was nearly six years old my recollections of "people of importance," which form the subject of the greater part of this book, were naturally limited. But Garibaldi had been pointed out to me driving across Cavendish Square with Peard (Garibaldi's Englishman) who was an acquaintance of my father. Thackeray had also impressed himself on my memory, as a benefactor if not as an author, by rushing into a confectioner's shop when he met me in the street and returning with purchases for his small cousin. The illustrious Rennell had when in the service of John Company married a member of that family, which occupies such an important place in Indian annals.

And so we travelled for the space of some eighteen months. Of all that I owe to exceptionally thoughtful parents there are few things for which I have more reason to thank them than for that glimpse in early years of a wider world. To know the cities and ways of many men at an age when the mind is full of receptive curiosity cannot fail to have a lasting influence on temperament. I acquired the elements of other languages and was enabled to witness phases of life which have long since passed away, retaining those experiences in a memory which the general monotonous uniformity of childhood's routine might not otherwise have quickened.

It was not the Second Empire at its apogee which made the winter of 1864-65 in Paris memorable to me, so much as the bazaars on the boulevards, the Guignol in the Champs Elysées, and the kindly French friends who entertained children at Christmas with unlimited *éclair*s and other hitherto unknown delightful things. The spring drew us southward through France into Switzerland where travelling was still chiefly accomplished by posting. I have a vivid recollection of the emotion inspired by the mountains, real mountains with snow-covered peaks and dark zones of fir, haunted with the dread of being lost in the pathless woods. We were, my sister and myself, in charge of a Hanoverian



nursery-governess. She was full of the lore of Nyxes and Cobbolds, who seemed appropriately to belong to that land of waterfall and forest. She would look into the sky at sunset and see in the fantastic forms of evening clouds premonitions of war and the movements of marshalled battalions. I have since come across types which strangely remind me of her in the books of Frensen.

A more positive legendary interest was stimulated by stories of Tell and the "Three Men," whose painted effigies still adorned some of the quaint wooden houses round the Lake of Lucerne where we spent a portion of the summer. My mother, who had a family literary tradition, also entertained me with tales from the history of Rome, to prepare me for a visit to the great city which was our ultimate goal. There were still in those days men wearing a strange dress passing along the highways who were, I was told, pilgrims bound by a vow, on their way to confess their sins to the Pope at Rome. I used to wonder what crimes they had committed which could only be purged by the long and weary march over the great mountains, and ever farther south. Thus early the name of Rome, which lay before us like a city of promise, came to inspire a certain awe.

At last the day arrived when we drove from the far end of the Lake of Lucerne into the heart of the mysterious mountains. There was a half-way station in the Gothard Pass, at Andermat, where a night was spent, chill with the early snow, and then the next day we descended by an astounding zigzag road into sunshine and Italy. There has remained with me ever since the impression of that first revelation of the world beyond the mountain pass. I remember crossing a great river, the Po, in a ferry boat to rejoin the train on the further side. Florence and Siena left no abiding memories, but the drive from Siena through the night to Rome was a great adventure, because the wheel of our carriage collapsed and we had to camp by the roadside until another vehicle could be procured. The brigands who stopped the coaches of travellers were not then wholly

extinct. Throughout the winter of 1865-66 we lived in the Via Condotti. My first recollection of Rome is of a walk with my father down the Corso, through the Piazza Ripresa dei Barberi, which has long ago disappeared, to descend upon the Forum through a maze of narrow streets which climbed the ridge of the Capitol. A comparatively small area had as yet been excavated. The three columns of the temple of Castor with their bases still covered stood up from a grassy level where cattle pastured. We went on through the Arch of Titus to the Colosseum, which was at that time still dedicated as a church. Altar stations surrounded the arena and in the centre was a great crucifix which remained there till after 1870. The vast amphitheatre was still covered with greenery, and creeping plants hung from the broken arches. Ancient castles and roofless abbeys, with the tales that haunted them, had already touched the chord of imagination in my age of wonder, and here was a whole world of ruins to explore. Of the scene as it then appeared the impression is still vivid after fifty years, as it is of the stately coaches of the cardinals, the uniforms of the Swiss halberdiers and of the weird funeral processions. There were only oil-lamps in the streets of what was then a comparatively small city in a vast circuit of walls, enclosing villas, parks and vineyards.

Even to-day I can shut my eyes and visualize a familiar scene on the Pincio, where Pius IX would occasionally descend from his gilded carriage to walk in the gardens, where all the people knelt to receive his blessing as he passed, accompanied by a group of purple monsignori, with a few Swiss guards bringing up the rear. Less definitely I remember a great pageant in St. Peter's at Easter time, when the Pope was carried high on men's shoulders through a surging crowd with waving of feather fans and blare of silver trumpets.

I have also a joyous memory of the week of Carnival, when the Corso was thronged with masks and allegorical cars, when we threw handfuls of little plaster pellets, called



*confetti*, from hospitable balconies upon the people below, till the road was deep in the dust of the powdered missiles. Each day's display concluded with a race of barebacked horses, down the whole length of the Corso from the Piazza del Popolo to the Ripresa dei Barberi near the Palace of Venice, where the wild career of the frightened animals was checked with canvas sheets. The last evening, that of Shrove Tuesday, was doubly memorable, for as twilight fell every window and every balcony was ablaze with little tapers and the fun grew fast and furious in the long illuminated street. The growth of population and the invasion of elements of rowdiness has long since killed King Carnival, and no one will see that picturesque festival again. It was the city of Story's *Roba di Roma*, and I am glad to have known it.

There was cholera in southern Italy, and on our way to Venice we were subjected to the medieval and quite useless process of disinfection by fumigation, herded in a room with numbers of fellow victims to breathe a choking sulphurous vapour. Venice was still in Austrian occupation, and a white-coated military band played every evening in the Piazza of St. Mark. But with the spring of 1866 came the menace of war—and there was the probability of Italy being involved. Venice was abandoned by the traveller and we went on into the Tyrol. At Botzen, now included as Bolzano in the greater Italy, I remember the marching of regiments, the trains discharging contingents of wounded, and the rumour that Garibaldi was coming across the Alps.

These experiences of travel did much to liberate my childhood from the conventions and prejudices which were still strong in the latter half of the Victorian era. The people of 1860 and '70 among whom I was brought up still wore the phylacteries of their caste, and every one was pitied or denounced who did not conform to the traditions of a comfortable squirearchy. Thus early emancipated, I did not enjoy my private school and resented the confinement and the strictly limited bounds. Life at a public



school, the old East India College of Haileybury, which had recently changed its character, seemed a pleasant release. And there I passed through that phase which is probably common to all boys of imagination who have not been brought up in an atmosphere of restricted tradition, the phase of beginning to think for oneself, to resent the injustice of the world and the apparent inequality in the distribution of opportunity. A spirit of revolt was encouraged by the enthusiasm which the first discovery of Shelley aroused and by the acquisition of Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads*, a book which probably few schoolboys possessed in the early 'seventies. There were hardly any time-honoured institutions which I was not ready to denounce in debate, and no scheme of reform which seemed too revolutionary. This was no doubt as it should be. Years afterwards, when I was Minister in Sweden, I heard repeated what King Oscar said to Barrère, who was afterwards my colleague in Rome, and who had perhaps been excusing the extreme opinions of his early years: "A young man, my dear Minister, who has not been a socialist before he is five and twenty shows that he has no heart. But if he continues to be one after five and twenty he shows that he has no head."

In any case I was not ostracized for my opinions. School life was rich in warm friendships. But these, unless renewed at college or in professional life, for the most part recede into the background with the parting of the ways. The successes and failures leave no strong mark behind, and "a rarer sort succeeds to these."

Real life began for me at Oxford, and here I would record one of many debts of gratitude which I owe to my father, who had selected Balliol for me somewhat against my own desire to go to Cambridge. To have been at Balliol under Jowett at the end of the 'seventies was a privilege which all my contemporaries there, and I think the world in general, have amply recognized. With such men as Green, Nettleship, Bradley, Evelyn Abbott, and Strachan-Davidson

that ideal type of the scholar-gentleman who afterwards succeeded to the mastership, to preside over the formation and development of intellectual energy, the college stood at that time at the highest point of prestige. Of those who have made their mark in public life, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Loreburn and Mr. Asquith belonged to an older generation. Lord Milner, though a good many years my senior, was still in residence and, with the right instinct of youth we had marked him down as destined for achievement. Lord Midleton was already practising his oratory at the Union. Lord Curzon came up a term or two only after I had joined, as did the late Sir Clinton Dawkins, and with these I formed abiding friendships. Of my own year three others besides myself became Ambassadors; Cecil Spring-Rice, Arthur Hardinge and Louis Mallet. Lord Grey of Fallodon joined just before I went down, as did the Archbishop of York. The most finished scholar and critic of our time, my old friend J. W. Mackail, was my contemporary, as was the eminent professor of literature W. P. Ker. Among the most distinguished in every walk of life, whether as politicians, judges, advocates, men of letters, journalists, or distinguished civil servants like Sir E. Ruggles Brise and Sir Bernard Mallet, will be found Balliol men of that time. But it was not only in intellectual accomplishment, in the class and prize lists, that the College excelled. During my four years the Balliol Eight was "head of the river" and we had more than our due share of "blues" in the cricket field and on the running path, among whom *pars magna fuit* that athlete unsurpassed, known to us as Billy Grenfell (Lord Desborough) with Savile Crossley (Lord Somerleyton) and Raymond Portal, the well-beloved, who died too early, a pioneer in Uganda, as will be told in a later page. Being a light weight I was retained to steer the Torpid and afterwards the Eight, so that my first terms were spent with the rowing set.

The characteristic of Balliol in those days was its universality. It included men of all sorts and conditions. There



were the elder sons, then still destined by tradition to play a part in public affairs, who were welcomed by the Master to what he was entitled to consider he had made the best training ground for youth. There were scholars from Glasgow and from the West of England, from that venerable Blundell's school which educated the pioneers of empire in the west country. There were rich men and poor men, many of the latter owing no one knew how much to the Master's generosity. There were a few exotics from the far east, and we all appreciated the gentle manners and the kindly heart of the some time regent of Persia, Nazir el Mulk (Aboul Cassem Khan). We had even some good comrades from France, one of whom had evidently derived his extensive English vocabulary from a study of Sir Walter Scott and Harrison Ainsworth. I remember one day when we had protested at some outrageous statement, he excused himself by explaining that: "I did only say it to make delight for you roaring blades." After the first terms I saw most of Curzon, George Leveson Gower, who went from college to be assistant private secretary to Mr. Gladstone, Leonard Shoolridge, who had the delicate critical sense of appreciation which is rare among our countrymen, W. Radcliffe, whose delightful book on *Fishing from the Earliest Times* is likely to become a classic, and Eustis Johnston, whose early death cast a gloom upon us all. He was half American by birth and brought a new element of freedom from convention and gaiety into the routine of life. The present Duke of Bedford was much with us, who with Lord Basing and Raymond Portal went from Oxford to the army. Among journalists there was Strachey of the *Spectator*, the late E. T. Cook, and Sidney Low, with a number of others who have distinguished themselves in letters. Spender of the *Westminster* belonged to a slightly later generation, as did Anthony Hope Hawkins. Malcolm Macmillan, the son of the famous Scotch publisher, had a touch of eccentric genius. He mysteriously disappeared in 1899 when I was at Athens, murdered, as we believed at



the time, by Dalmatian shepherds on the summit of the Asiatic Olympus.

One day a mutual friend brought to my rooms Oscar Wilde, who, having won the Newdigate, was an object of special regard to me. There was an immediate fascination in the unconventional freedom of his brilliant conversation and his sureness of himself. At Oxford, however, I hardly saw him, as he was many years my senior, and Balliol and Magdalen are rather far apart. During my first years Ruskin was Slade Professor of Art. His influence was then at its highest, and his lectures were filled to overflowing. Of the Oxford personalities outside my own College I saw most of Raper of Trinity. Pater, a weird exotic individuality, I met from time to time, and the Humphry Wards, who had not yet moved to London, made me welcome at their house. Jowett would occasionally invite me to go for a walk with him, and scare me to death by his long silences or his monosyllabic replies, which seemed to petrify all attempts at intimacy. It was only later when I read essays to him that I learned to know him better, and fell under the magic of his personal influence. Even then after dessert in his dining room he could be very formidable with his abrupt criticisms. There was in our quartette of essay readers a young Scotchman who affected a rather florid style, and concluded one of his efforts with this remarkable peroration: "The pheelosophers of ancient Greece were in fact seetuated as it were upon a pendulum, which was for ever swinging between the opposing poles of being and not being." The Master sniffed ominously and then observed: "That's great rubbish about the pendulum, Mr. ——. Don't write me any more stuff of that kind!"

Rhoda Broughton was at that time living in Holywell, and was much attached to her undergraduate friends. She had a great heart, but a caustic tongue, which often admonished me not to be "pert." Our old Oxford acquaintance was maintained through later years. She was a very gallant soul, and proud, maintaining herself to the end by her

clever pen. There is, I think, a touch of autobiography in her very last book, the closing words of which with their *moritura te saluto* were written only just before her death.

We were by no means serious at Balliol. Life was full of interest and incident, and not all of us gave the due proportion of time to the formidable library of books which had to be absorbed for the final test of Greats. Dilettantism is dangerously attractive in early life. With Harold Boulton I started and edited there a little magazine of poetry which eventually produced a rival with perhaps a rather higher standard than the original. We founded an inter-collegiate society where papers were read on theory and practice in art, and some of us drew in a class which the late Sir W. Richmond, as Slade professor, directed at the Taylorian. In my last year we also produced in college the Agamemnon, the first of those classic revivals which have since become popular. It was so much appreciated that we went on tour by request after the end of term to Eton, Harrow and Winchester, and finally to London. W. Bruce (of Balliol) looked magnificently heroic as the King, and F. R. Benson (of New) the moving spirit, after his success as Clytemnestra, decided to devote himself to the stage, which he has done so much to elevate. The Cassandra of Laurence (of Balliol) was a great performance. As leader of the chorus, as well as scene painter, I had to commit to memory nearly all those wonderful lyric strophes, and even now I have not forgotten them. The last long vacation called for desperate expedients, and when the crucial moment came I knew a good deal well, and a good deal only sketchily. Since then I have always deeply regretted that I did not begin earlier to work with method and make my second into a first, in which category only two names were included in December, 1880. Jowett always maintained that fair intelligence and six hours' work all through would secure a first. The little extra effort to become the master and not merely the apprentice would have been invaluable as a discipline in its effect on after life. My own group of friends rather



gravitated to the seconds than the firsts, though Curzon retrieved the position by obtaining an All Souls fellowship in addition to a number of other academic distinctions. I did my duty to the College, however, by winning the Newdigate prize, the subject for which was the congenial one of Sir Walter Raleigh.

In the Sheldonian Theatre, where I passed through the ordeal of reading my poem without the customary interruptions, I also saw for the first time one who was afterwards to be my chief, and a very kind unfailing friend, Lord Dufferin, when he received the honorary degree of the University. It was there also I saw Turgéneff, leonine and magnificent in his crimson gown. He was an occasional guest of Jowett, and to those who knew the master the humour of the following story may appeal. Turgéneff had been speaking of the many religious sects which were constantly forming in Russia, and said he wished he had studied them more from the point of view of human analysis. He had witnessed the uprise of a new religion in a familiar village. A cobbler had gone to Germany and there had become possessed of a Bible, which he had studied and assimilated. Returning to his native place with the new knowledge he became the prophet of a self-evolved creed, based on the literal interpretation of the New Testament. Jowett was interested, and inquired whether there was any value in the teaching thus inspired. "No," replied Turgéneff, "it was all schlim-schlam and vish-vash, what you call Broad Church!"

The college was full of stories of the Master's sayings and doings, and the more memorable of them are probably on record. The one which most appealed to me, as revealing the humorous common-sense with which he could put down the pretensions of the presumptuous, has no doubt been often told. But I do not remember to have seen it in print. An undergraduate who had been reported to him for repeated and contumacious refusal to attend Chapel, was ready with his excuse, which was that after long and



mature reflection he had been unable to find a God. The interview was at nine in the morning. The Master took out his watch and curtly observed: "You will have to find one by twelve o'clock or to go down."

So those glorious years came to an end, and it was time to think of preparing to compete for the diplomatic service, which it was my father's ambition that I should enter. Looking back from far away at those great days of youth and discovery, I see how much I have owed to my friends, who forgave me many things and accepted me in spite of certain characteristics which must have seemed abnormal to the average sturdy barbarian of my own age. I have all my life been conscious of a strong duality of nature and of a struggle between opposing impulses. The desire to take a part in all that was manly and physically healthy contended with a certain tenderness of sentiment which has always made me reluctant to kill. An ambition to free myself from trammels and conventions has continually been at war with an inherent sense of duty and obligation and a reverence for custom and tradition. While leading the normal life of other men I have always been intensely susceptible to the moods of nature. Cloud effects and drifting shadows over a landscape affected me physically, and certain aspects of outward things moved me with an almost uncanny awe. Is there an instinctive pagan temperament? Of all the many lands in which I have lived, perhaps Greece has appealed to me most, because there the correlation between nature and myself seemed closest, most appreciable. I have always felt there the sense of some occult power surviving, some almost conscious radiation of the soul of the world, the spirit which the Greek of old, possessed by it, symbolized in the nature gods whose presence he did not so much conceive as feel.

The entry to the diplomatic service, which had recently been brought under the rule of competition, required a nomination, which had been originally promised through the agency of Lord Lytton. But I had passed several of

the Easter vacations with my friend George Leveson Gower in his father's hospitable house at Holmbury and had there made the acquaintance of his uncle, Lord Granville, who was then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and who was ready to welcome me to the Foreign Office. But there was no immediate prospect of vacancies, and so after leaving Balliol I spent the winter and spring at Rome. Gerald Portal, with whom I was afterwards to be associated in Africa, was an attaché there under Sir Augustus Paget, and I little thought when attending an evening party at the Embassy that I should one day come to preside over it myself for a long series of years. I painted from models, wrote many poems and enjoyed life immensely in the first burst of liberty from educational restraints.

During this visit I made the acquaintance of Ouida, whom I also saw later in her villa at Florence. She was then at the height of her popular fame. Though we never actually met again in after years she maintained a desultory correspondence with me, and especially in the grim closing years of her life, which were destined to be, as she said, like those of an old horse, full of misery. Poor Ouida ! She had a passion for beauty in all forms, and a wealth of imagination which allowed her to identify herself with the ideal creatures she incarnated. It was the more pathetic to realize how poorly nature had endowed her, even to the tone of her voice which was harsh and unpleasing. She dressed herself, nevertheless, in those days with an extravagance which only drew attention to her disadvantages. But she had a big heart and a certain intuition of genius. She was recklessly generous and improvident, and not always discriminating in the causes which she espoused. The books which earned her vogue were those least worth reading. No one ever interpreted more delicately the romance of the Italy of forty years ago than she has done in *Pascarel*, *Signa*, *Ariadne* and *In Maremma*. For the rest she lived in a world created by her own imagination, not really observed or known, but as she gorgeously would



have it to be. She had her day and her night, and a very dark night it was.

I returned from Italy to revel in a first season. My Oxford intimates had also gravitated to London, where George Leveson Gower was already established at 10 Downing Street, working with another constant friend of the future, Spencer Lyttelton. The discovery of London was absorbing in those irresponsible days. Many of our old landmarks have now disappeared. We used occasionally to attend, somewhat in a spirit of levity, a well-known institution for public debate in the neighbourhood of Fleet Street, known as Cogers. It was frequented by the clerks and John Gilpins of the neighbourhood and presided over by a venerable grey-bearded citizen, known as the "Vice," who presumably substituted some more illustrious chairman. He used to circulate, printed on little slips of coloured paper, specimens of the wit and wisdom of Lord Beaconsfield. Cogers had rather a conservative character. But just inside old Temple Bar, behind a public house, was the more democratic Temple Discussion Forum, a popular parliament which had the probably quite unjustified reputation of having, in the beginning of the century, given occasion to the Great Corsican to denounce the misrepresentations there circulated by British middle-class opinion. One night a group of old Balliol friends, including Curzon, Cecil Spring-Rice, Clinton Dawkins and myself, adjourned after a John-sonian banquet at the old Cock Tavern to the Forum, where each of us had engaged himself to make a violent speech in a sense diametrically opposite to his natural political convictions. I cannot now recall the particular subject proposed that evening for discussion, stimulated by whisky hot or cold. But the extreme radical, not to say subversive opinions, eloquently and forcibly advanced by the present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs so roused the indignation of a medical student, that he invited "this pink-cheeked Oxonian" to come out behind the bar, and have his head punched. At this moment Clinton Dawkins, who was an



accomplished light-weight boxer, diverted the quarrel to himself by the vigour of the personal opinion he expressed of the medical student and all his works. But when we went out to see the fun the challenger had disappeared.

Social life was rapidly expanding into wider circles, but the old order still maintained some pride of exclusiveness, and the great houses were not overcrowded. The hardy climber encountered a certain climatic resistance, and there were still things which were not done. There was even a reluctance to admit the propriety of reversing in the ball-room, so long as there was still space enough for the swing and movement of the delightful old Strauss waltzes. Hours were much later than to-day, and I grew quite familiar with the aspect of London at dawn on a May or June morning. But from the first the social world of the 'eighties was to me less absorbing than the life of art and letters into which I seemed naturally to drift.

Saturday afternoons were spent with Richmond at Hammersmith for tennis and supper with music and riotous conversation and tobacco. Through him I became acquainted with William Morris and in due course with Burne-Jones, the most lovable of men. Wilde I met again, established in an old-world apartment in Salisbury Street, Strand, which had, I believe, once been occupied by d'Orsay, amusing a growing circle with paradox and repartee. Relations were also established with the theatre, the connecting link being Johnston Forbes Robertson, who was abandoning portrait painting for the stage, and Mowbray Morris, the "man of letters," who was then theatrical critic to *The Times*. Morris, who had strong views as to the independence of criticism, always insisted on buying his own stall for a first performance. He soon afterwards parted company with *The Times*, of which his father, said to be the Beau Morris of Thackeray, had been for many years the manager, owing to a quarrel in which he was probably right in principle but obviously wrong in practice. For many years he edited *Macmillan's Magazine* and was

one of the literary advisers to that eminent house. Many young authors owed him a debt for advice and encouragement at the beginning of their career. He had a fine and discriminating judgment in literature, with a sense of humour which carried him through hard times and he was among the few accomplished letter-writers who survived the last century. Cheap postage tended to substitute notes for letters, and the typing machine is finally killing all distinction of epistolary style. There are not many left to-day who write real letters. Of those that remain, John Fortescue, the historian of the British Army, shares my regard for the memory of the "man of letters."

Wilde brought me into touch with James McNeil Whistler, who had lately returned from temporary exile. With that remarkable man, the best of friends and the most inexorable of enemies, intimacy was immediate, and for the next year or two I was constantly with him. His famous law-suit with Ruskin, one of the few legal battles in which the public had been entertained with rare and not with judicial honour, had taken place not long previously, and one of its results had been Jimmy's bankruptcy, which the farthing damages obtained from Ruskin was inadequate to delay. There are few now who remember how he turned the tables on the majestic Sir Richard Webster, who was bringing all the guns of his forensic irony to bear in his examination. A number of *nocturnes* and *arrangements* had been brought into court and submitted to a bewildered jury, and Sir Richard, feeling that he had them well in hand, addressed the complainant *ore rotundo*. "Now, Mr. Whistler," he said, "do you think that you could make the gentlemen of the jury understand the merits of these paintings,—do you think you could make *me* understand them?" Jimmy readjusted his eyeglass, and after steadily contemplating the learned advocate's self-complacent face for some seconds amid the breathless silence of the Court replied: "No, I don't think I could." After a protracted residence in Venice, where he reconstituted his financial position by



executing a wonderful series of etchings, he returned to Tite Street, not, however, to the White House but to a studio, to which was attached a series of rooms alternately revealing yellow walls and blue ceilings or blue walls and yellow ceilings, the tints of distemper having been mixed by his own hand to exactly the delicate shade required.

Here were renewed the delightful Sunday morning "déjeuners," at which so many of his best things were said. At one of these we discovered we had sat down thirteen; the number of arrivals was always rather uncertain. Among the guests was a young and very attractive girl, no doubt the youngest of those present. A few days afterwards she was suddenly taken ill and died. Nor did this apparent illustration of the old superstition end there. An elderly general who had also been present, and who was certainly the oldest of the party, heard the sad news at his club soon afterwards and dropped down dead. I had a somewhat similar experience not long afterwards when I was at Berlin. On the other hand, I have assisted at innumerable other tables of thirteen without any sinister result. The universality of the superstition is remarkable, and in the South of Europe a dinner of thirteen is absolutely *taboo*.

To Whistler a gallery was a necessity and unlike most artists he worked most strenuously in the presence of a small group of admirers. Waldo Story, the American sculptor, was often there, and Walter Sickert, as well as another young American artist, Harper Pennington. At this time he was experimenting a good deal with petroleum as a medium, painting with brushes more than two feet long which he held by the extreme end in his nervous delicate fingers, surveying his picture and his model across the whole length of the studio, and then dashing up at a run to place the telling stroke on the canvas. I made a rough calculation one day of the mileage he covered during a day's work. Occasionally I used to assist him in printing his etchings. We obtained the best hand-made paper out

of old folios which frequently had a number of blank pages at the beginning and the end. These were carefully damped and brushed with a soft long-haired brush to rough the surface, and Jimmy came to regard me as something of an expert in their preparation. The inking of the plate was a labour of infinite patience demanding experience and dexterity. He worked it over and over again with the flat of the hand until precisely the right proportion of ink remained, and even then after we had put the plate through the press only a few proofs were selected as adequate, and the majority perhaps were destroyed. A whole morning might go in producing only two or three which satisfied his fastidious standard of perfection.

Whistler would at times enlarge for my benefit on his conception of art. He admitted that there was an art or rather a craft of illustration, of pictorial and historical representation. But this was a craft which did not interest him. The painter had to render and give eternity to such combinations of colour in atmosphere as his artistic sensibility taught him would constitute a harmony. Such combinations might even be present in actuality when nature had for once done the right thing. But nature's presentation was, he contended, often glaring, crude and inharmonious. Therefore to the young student who attempted to justify his claim to paint exactly what he saw Jimmy retorted, "If you do you will be sorry when you see what you paint." It was not the painter's business to tell a story or evoke an emotion, except the emotion produced by a conscient sense of beauty. "Those are trees, I suppose," said some one, indicating a dark patch in one of his nocturnes. "Very possibly," said Jimmy, "I don't know." For him they were only a dark mass which gave value to the light of a bursting rocket against the sky. In portraiture he held that the subject should be presented as seen in a room, at a certain distance from the eye, enveloped in a certain atmosphere; not in high relief and standing out as it were in front of the frame, "with the



iris showing the reflection of the window and the hansom cab beyond it, upside down ! ”

There was a worthy and conscientious painter in water colours who won the enthusiastic approval of Ruskin and achieved a certain mid-Victorian repute by spending years of his life on a camp-stool in front of St. Mark's at Venice and elaborately reproducing with a telescopic sight every detail, crevice and tessera of mosaic in that astoundingly harmonious whole. Jimmy stood one day behind him, affecting to take a deep interest in his miniature brush-work, while with a piece of white chalk he wrote on the back of his victim's coat, "I am totally blind." Thus unconsciously embellished, the good man laboriously worked on, a joy to the passing tourist, and the devil in Whistler who could quote Scripture was ready with his appropriate tag about the one who getteth up early and taketh pains and is only the more behind.

Few of the old Academic School escaped his mordant humour. He was once in a country house where Poynter was also staying, "poor old Poynter," as he called him. The latter went out one morning to draw in the park, and there Jimmy found him, surrounded by a group of admiring ladies who were watching the great man at work. "What are you doing there, Poynter ?" said he. "Oh," replied Poynter deprecatingly, "I am only touching up a little thing I began here many years ago." "That's no excuse, Poynter !" was his parting shot as he walked on.

They had known each other as young men in Paris with du Maurier and others. When the latter was producing his novel of *Trilby*, in the first serial numbers Whistler was unmistakably indicated among the characters, and not altogether flatteringly, both in the text and the illustrations. He entered a strident protest, with the result that these references were eliminated. Where his art was concerned the genial master took himself very seriously, and it passed the wit of most men to get the best of it in a quarrel with him. One day we were preparing the catalogue for a

collection of his etchings to be exhibited in the spring. His spirit of mischief conceived the expedient of printing under each title one or two selections from judgments passed on his works by the critics, which in many if not in most cases had no reference to the particular plate. To these strictures some comments in marginal notes were added by the "Butterfly" himself. A passage culled from one eminent critic attached to a particularly charming dry-point had been ; "There is merit in them and I do not wish to understate it." When the proofs arrived, the printer (but was it the printer ?) had read "*understand*" in place of "*understate*." "That," said Jimmy, "is too providentially good to be altered, and we will let it stand as it is." The final page of the catalogue contained a few felicitous selections from the Book of Proverbs : "Therefore is judgment far from us,"—"We all roar like bulls," etc. He used to say that his early New England education, based on the scriptures, stood him in good stead in controversial battles, and his unfailing memory was always ready with a quotation appropriate to the situation.

No man ever loved his own work as Whistler did. It was his particular joy to get back by some excuse or other and keep in his studio pictures with which he had long parted. This passion for recovering his former productions, not from mercenary motives, for Jimmy was never mercenary and scrupulously honourable about obligations, took on one occasion a curious form. One of his old patrons had lost a great deal of money in business and found himself obliged to dispose of his collection. Whistler convinced him that he would himself be able to obtain better prices for his own work by placing it where he knew it to be in demand, than could be secured in an auction room. Thus he obtained for a few weeks the custody of six of his beloved pictures, among which was the beautiful "Symphony in White," and also a seventh of which he had made a present to this patron. Now as regards this last, a wonderful atmospheric presentation of sky and sea and sand, he



reflected long on the following lines, which he explained to his friend, who took no exception to the proposition. "As regards the six pictures; well, I will obtain for you the best conditions available. But this other picture you know was a gift. Now a gift implies a certain relation of esteem and affection between giver and receiver, and so long as that relation subsists the gift preserves its character as evidence of the relation. On the other hand to contemplate selling such a gift would imply a cessation of the relations by which the picture came into your possession. If you invite me to sell that picture for you those relations have obviously ceased, and in short the picture must revert to the giver!" And so it remained in his possession for many years.<sup>1</sup>

Prominent among the Whistlerians was Pellegrini, known to his friends as the Pelican, the famous caricaturist of *Vanity Fair* who, as Jimmy used to say, taught all the others what they were never able to do. An exile from his native Naples "Ape," was of the rarest blood of Bohemia. Although he passed the greater part of a lifetime in London his English remained rudimentary, and did not go much beyond a working knowledge of the cruder forms of expression not used in polite society. There was in those days an Italian confectioner's shop in Great Portland Street where Neapolitan ices were supplied to clients, and a large bottle of lemonade, with a lemon in the neck in place of a cork, adorned the window to indicate the character of the house. At the back of the shop was a little room where the best of Italian cooking could be sampled, and there I used occasionally to lunch with the Pelican and Tosti and Costa and other eminences of the colony. Pellegrini would sit upon a barrel in the doorway leading from the back room to the shop, eating his *polpette* and pausing from time to time to address the young lady behind the counter as "angeol." That little shop in due course expanded and became Pagani's Restaurant where, when declining health

<sup>1</sup> This picture is now in the gallery of Mrs. Gardner, at Boston.

and the ambition to become a portrait painter in which he did not succeed, made life difficult for our old friend, he was hospitably cared for by the kindly proprietor.

In 1881 I published a small volume of poems written after leaving Oxford under the title of *Songs in the South*, and in a measure enjoyed success, for after a kindly welcome from the reviewers, the whole small edition was disposed of. Wilde at that time also brought out his first volume of poems. I had endeavoured, but in vain, to induce him to eliminate one or two passages which violated my own sense of taste. They revealed his ability, his command of language and feeling for colour. But there was an artificiality in the longer and more recent poems and a consciousness which had not been so apparent in his earliest efforts. I remember finding him one morning engaged upon one of the longer poems in that volume, with a botanical work in front of him from which he was selecting the names of flowers most pleasing to the ear to plant in his garden of verse. There was more power behind him than he really used.

In those early Bohemian days I saw a great deal of that brilliant but unhappy man, and as a year or so later we quarrelled irretrievably and met no more, I feel the greater obligation to do justice to certain aspects of the man as I knew him. And here also I would record a debt, inasmuch as he helped me to independence of thought and opinion. Normal education and surroundings had exercised a certain restraint on an imagination which resented such control, and association with this daring and gifted personality brought me nearer to emancipation from convention. He had undoubtedly a keen perception of beauty, almost overshadowed by his tremendous sense of humour, which led him into extravagances of paradox. His laughter was genuine, spontaneous and infectious. He had a vivid quickness of apprehension, and an absorbent memory. But at the period of our acquaintance he had accomplished little to entitle him to other recognition than that which his



ready wit and deliberate eccentricity commanded. His literary and dramatic gifts were developed later and have been fully recognized since his tragic end.

What was less appreciated then as now was his really genial and kindly nature, which seemed at times in strident contrast with his egotism, self-assertion and incorrigible love of notoriety. No one was more ready than he was at that time to accept the laugh against himself, and no one could be more generous in acknowledging the qualities and gifts of his friends. Of that unhappy madness which many years afterwards made havoc of a gifted life, we saw no premonition in those London days. On the contrary, an incident which I well remember revealed that he was fully alive to the peril of undesirable associations. In some studio exhibition we had met a man, now long since dead, who had rather impressed me with his exposition of artistic ideals, and on my referring with interest to his observations as we came away, Wilde observed: "Yes, he is most agreeable, but you should know that he is not a man in whose company we could afford to be seen." On another occasion, when there had been a disastrous flood in Lambeth after an unusually high tide, and a number of houses of the very poor were wrecked, we went together to see what we could do to help the unfortunate families who were camping in the street, and he penetrated into a miserable tenement and talked to an old bed-ridden Irish woman, cheering her with his merry humour and assisting her with little necessities for which, as he said, she had more than compensated him by praying that "the Lord would give him a bed in glory." A wretched bed was all her world, and a bed in glory was her ideal. He was generous and reckless, with no thought for the morrow, and indeed indolent until a desperate obligation to work came home to him. I would like this side of his nature to be known, and that some kindly thought should go back to the tragic life of which we hoped so much, the more so because we quarrelled, and when there is a quarrel

probably neither of the parties to it is wholly in the right.

His personality in those days was an outrage to the ordinary philistine, who nevertheless suddenly found himself confronted by a flash of humour or a profound observation which commanded his respect. The attraction of his dominant personality took a strong hold upon me. I believed him to have a touch of genius, and indeed it was there, when he did not do it injustice by courting notoriety. My friends criticized the ascendancy which he began to exercise, and being young I took a certain defiant pride in their criticism. To enterprising youth the numbers are always wrong, and rejection with the remnant satisfies a certain sense of self-pride. Henri Murger's *Vie de Bohème* was our gospel, but we perhaps forgot that the real moral of that immortal book is to be found in the introduction.

Wilde, who by now had received the compliment of being burlesqued on the stage, became the accepted protagonist of a movement which he was himself much too brilliant to take seriously. A limited number of enthusiasts painted the porticoes of their houses peacock blue, and many young ladies from South Kensington went, as Whistler most unkindly put it, "down Petticoat Lane, there on a Sabbath to gather from the dull rags of ages wherewith to bedeck themselves." It is strange, looking back on what was known as the æsthetic movement, to remember how devoid of all sense of the appropriate were certain gaunt and sallow ladies, who used to appear at the private views dressed in a poor travesty of the robes which so well became the opulent beauty of a Venetian courtesan on the canvas of a Paris Bordone.

It was inevitable under the circumstances that Wilde should be invited to lecture in America. He had not yet begun to write plays and since for him as for Beaudelaire "*le superflu était le nécessaire*," he accepted the invitation. What he was to tell the lecture-loving public in the States he hardly knew himself. But it had been assumed that he had a message to deliver, and one had to be found. It



was vaguely presumed to be about Art, and Whistler's comments were entertaining, for none but the artist, indeed none living but one artist, had any title to speak on such a subject. Just before he left he was entertained to dinner at one of the taverns of Bohemia. "I hope," said our guest to Whistler, "that I shall not be sea-sick crossing the Atlantic."—"Well, Oscar, if you are," said Jimmy, "throw up Burne-Jones!" He had spontaneously offered to take my little book of poems with him and have it published in America, and to a young man ambitious of recognition it seemed an attractive proposition. This it was which led to our quarrel, the story of which can have but little interest for others. A member of the firm which produced the eccentric volume informed me that they had had *carte blanche* to do what they liked with it, and had merely regarded it as a sort of advertisement or appeal to notoriety, and had for this purpose used up a lot of old blocks, ostensibly for decoration. A letter which I wrote to him, in which I also warned him of the harm which I felt he was doing to himself by his extravagant performances in America, gave profound offence. When he returned dressed in a fantastic suit of red plush, assuming a sort of Olympian attitude as of one who could do no wrong, we parted in anger and did not meet again. Whistler also parted company with him soon afterwards, and a paper battle ensued in which as usual the painter had the last word.

Intimacy with Whistler did not prevent my also seeing a great deal of Burne-Jones, antagonistic as these two were to each other in every respect. Those who only knew Burne-Jones from his work and might seek to deduce from its spirit what manner of man he was, would never conceive the gaiety, the humour and the wholly lovable nature of the man. He had passed through a bitter period of struggle, never forsaking his high ideals, and had had to wait long before appreciation and recognition came. But he was always assured of the devotion of a small group of friends

which such a character as his cannot fail to command. I spent many happy evenings at the Grange in West Kensington in that happy family circle. There were days when in the studio, which was guarded with a certain reverent mystery until the moment when the master was satisfied, things had not gone well and he was verging on depression, and then in the company of a few friends the old humour would reassert itself and preoccupation would be forgotten till the morrow. I remember a delightful spontaneous outburst of the artist's feeling one day in the garden when he called to his daughter to bring him a hat, and a new silk hat of ceremony was produced. "Not that thing," said B.-J., dropping it on the grass and putting his foot through five and twenty shillings, "bring me a proper hat!" At supper he would have a sheaf of little papers and a pencil by him and would illustrate his ideas with the most delightful caricatures, which were quite peculiar to himself. His own person was always represented by a little owl, which in a few strokes assumed the varying expression of his feelings as affected by the episode under discussion. His original sense of the humour of things and the way he saw them may be illustrated by the story of his Neapolitan model which he told us one evening as a tragedy in three acts, with an epilogue. She was a very silent girl, and during a month of work in his studio she only spoke four times. At the end of the first week she suddenly spontaneously exclaimed: "I was born on a burning mountain." That is Act I, supplying the introduction and the local colour. At the end of the second week she sighed and said: "I love Giacinto." At the end of the third week she was heard to mutter fiercely: "I wish I were the Queen, I would kill Mariannina." Then came the epilogue and her dramatic vengeance for the slighting of her charms. She was being paid off and spoke, for her at length, in three staccato sentences: "You have been kind to me.—I will tell you something for your good.—Don't eat the blue ices!"



He did for me a wonderful thing which I have always remembered with the deepest gratitude. I had been spending the summer in France, at Amboise in Touraine. Not far away at Tours there are in the Museum two of the predella panels belonging to the great Mantegna picture in San Zeno at Verona. The third, a crucifixion, is in the Louvre. When after the fall of Napoleon the looted treasures of Italy were restored, the Madonna went back to Verona, but the three wonderful little panels of the predella had been dispersed and they remained in France. Burne-Jones wished to have photographs of the two at Tours. But they had never been photographed and as it seemed to be very difficult to obtain authority to reproduce them I went every Saturday to Tours and made a careful pencil copy of one of them, the Agony in the Garden, for him. He was much touched at the desire, a very natural one, to give him pleasure. Not long afterwards, having suspected that I was wavering whether I should take up the diplomatic service as a profession, or rather follow art or literature, he told me that if I cared to come and work in his studio he would gladly welcome me and would help me in every way he could. I was deeply impressed with his kindness, the more so as his studio, like the workshop of the alchemist, was a place of jealously guarded access into which few penetrated, except when exhibitions were deliberately organized there. But I knew well enough that though I had always had a certain facility for drawing I had no talent which could justify my accepting such a proposal.

Rossetti, who was in failing health and had become a recluse, I never knew, nor did I ever meet Swinburne. Unfortunately I early got myself into trouble with the author of *Poems and Ballads*, and more especially, as I was informed, with his constant companion, Theodore Watts, who was of course more royalist than the king. The latter had not then assumed his supplementary cognomen of Dunton. When he did so he received a postcard from Whistler with only these two words above the well-known

emblem of a butterfly with a sting in the tail, "What's Dunton?" Swinburne, who in earlier days had addressed an enthusiastic poem to "Walt Whitman in America," afterwards wrote a vitriolic attack upon his literary work in the *Fortnightly Review*, in which he described him as pursuing a Hottentot Venus with a muck-rake, together with other similar extravagances of hyperbolic denunciation. This article aroused my youthful indignation, as I was a sincere if discriminating admirer of "Leaves of Grass" and "Drumtaps," which contained a genuine outburst of natural song, a roughhewn art developing under elemental conditions. Thus moved I published a counterblast in some verses which were regarded as *lèse-majesté*. I have found them among my papers. The august shades will not be vexed if they are reprinted.

#### TO WALT WHITMAN.

AFTER READING A RECENT ARTICLE IN THE "FORTNIGHTLY  
REVIEW."

LAUGH loud from the merry old throat, rough Walt, in your heaven  
of rest,

For the curse of the prophet of Putney proscribes you the isles of  
the blest !

Oh, where are the frenzied invective, the sonnets that "stung like  
a whip,"

Protests anapaestic, indignant, that flashed from his radical lip ?

He has passed from the van to the rearguard, forsaking the Ayes  
for the Noes,

Renouncing the lyric of passion to preach in extravagant prose !

He has turned on you too, Camerado, has passed from the few to  
the throng ;

Content you and smile and remember he called on you once for a  
song !

But for us, we will cling to our follies ; and save us, oh tyrannous  
Truth,

From a middle-age spent in recanting the faith and the fire of our  
youth !



And as we rejoiced to have found you, accepting the whole for the part,

The virtues implying the failings, we will keep your old place in the heart.

We shall say you were shaggy and rough and untamed as the land of your birth,

But large with the heart of its greatness to compass the glory of earth.

We will love you and praise and remember when lilacs are blooming once more,

And thrill at the camp and the drumtap, and weep with the bird on the shore.

There is music in murmur of forest and rhythm in slapping of waves,

And of such was the music and rhythm, old Walt, of thy mutinous staves.

For the trick of the rhyme and the tinkle are easy enough to acquire, But the insight, the reading of nature, were thine, and the throb and the fire !

There is more of the roar of the ocean with thee, of the scent of the pines,

Than in all his recoiling and foaming up and down anapaestical lines !

So laugh and content you, old Walt, while the fever remains let him rave ;

Let him be ; he has damned you with Byron, who hardly will turn in his grave !

But, oh bard of the magical measures, go back to your kisses and doves,

The allurements of alliteration, romaunts of your troubadour loves !

Disbelieve, since you must, in the ardour of old you were first to extol,

Disbelieve in the future, the present, and if need be, look after your soul !

But forbear to believe that *your* footprints are stainless wherever you trod,

Because there was lilt in your lewdness and rhyme in your girding at God.

There are more tears on earth when a poet renounces the stars of  
 his youth,  
 Than for all the blind groping of dunces who never set eyes upon  
 Truth !

My first attempt to satisfy the Civil Service Commissioners and to enter the Diplomatic service proved a severe blow to my vanity. There was only one vacancy to be filled, and six candidates were nominated to compete for it. The test examination covered some ten or twelve subjects, and though I came out top in two-thirds of these, and second or third in the others, the Commissioners disqualified me for handwriting and orthography, to which I must admit I had paid little attention. There was nothing for it but to await another occasion, which did not occur until July in the following year, when, having taken more care to write legibly and correct my papers, I succeeded in passing in at the head of the list.

Meanwhile at this period I used to go on one or two evenings every week to Hackney, to work for the Eton Mission, where Spring-Rice took a great interest in a boys' club. His curious and rather bitter irony was illustrated by a story, which I suspected him of having invented, about a lady of fashion who was trying in her own way to do much what we were aiming at, by visiting in the poor quarters of London. At one door she was refused admission by an indignant defender of her own privacy, who recommended her "not to come here and clean your soul on me !" I had a reading class for grown-up men, and a small class of working men to whom I endeavoured to impart the elements of political economy. There were a few among them in whom a ten hours working day had not benumbed all consciousness of their dead weight of ignorance, and who desired to learn in order to help their fellow workers. But the most successful of our enterprises were no doubt the theatrical performances which we organized at Hackney, where the genuine appreciation of the audience was an ample reward for the trouble.



While it is my intention to write down as truthfully and suggestively as possible what I remember of interesting people and public events, I shall refrain for obvious reasons from touching on matters which are of an intimate personal character. There are incidents and experiences in life which must remain inviolate in the sanctuary of memory. And if in these pages I seem to refer after more than thirty years with a certain reverent tenderness to a remarkable personality which influenced my life at this time, it is because her brief passage across this troubled world was a source of so much delight to my particular group of friends, as well as to many of a much older generation, that to pass over all mention of her beneficent presence would seem an inexplicable omission on the part of one who was among the first to be sensible of the spell which she exercised. She has moreover filled a conspicuous place in other biographies. It was in the year 1882 that I first met that radiant little being, with the genius of quick intuitive apprehension and sympathetic response, who was known as Laura Tennant, and who for one short happy year became Laura Lyttelton, to die in April 1886 and make the world darker for a large number of intensely devoted friends. It can have been given to few to make so deep an impression on contemporary life at so early an age. She was only eighteen when we first met, and a common adoration of Shelley opened the door to immediate intimacy. At a time of considerable depression and disillusion she brightened my way with her magical power of sympathy and lucid appreciation of the things which really matter. She was profoundly believing in an unquestioning spirit of childlike faith, which did not obtrude itself, but in its large charity was only an added grace. A favourite precept quoted in her first letter to me was from Marcus Aurelius: "Adorn thyself with simplicity and modesty, and with indifference to the things which lie between virtue and vice."

Our friendship quickly ripening served to dissipate false lights and artificial standards, and brought me back to the

clear morning air. Therefore to her also I would record unforgettable gratitude.

Early in the following year she left England to spend some months in South Africa with a sister who was threatened with the malady to which so many of that brilliant family were victims. Our personal intercourse was consequently for a time interrupted, but her letters were wonderful, and so they remain when re-read after an interval of more than half a life-time. Of these a large number are in my possession. If years hence the little packet were to fall into the hands of one who knew none of those concerned the letters would no doubt arouse curiosity and interest in the character who, if genius can be revealed in sympathy, had such a touch of genius. They were, however, not meant for other eyes, and I shall respect their confidence. But as testimony to a certain sense of imaginative mysticism, which I have never seen alluded to in the references to Laura Tennant in other books, it may be legitimate to quote the concluding passage from one of these written in the house of Lady Haversham at Tintagel, where I had hoped to join the party but was prevented by obligations at the Foreign Office: "There is a mist on the sea to-day and the land is grey and refuses to smile. The air is full of the silent music that only those that stand in solitary places are allowed to hear, and the church lifts up its strong tower to God and speaks of the half-hour of silence in Heaven in which we will hear nothing but the soothed sobs of Christ's comforted children. Good-bye." There are many such spontaneous outbursts of feeling in these remarkable letters. One received at the end of the same year in Berlin has its haunting Christmas message: "And what can I wish you at this peace-bringing season. Peace—yes Peace, not where there is no Peace, but the God of Peace in your heart and the Christchild arms round you always, and the little Sacred Feet to lead you in the difficult places." And these passages do not belong to letters of sentiment, but only to the correspondence between two devoted friends. Mrs. Asquith in



her autobiography has written that the two people who best knew the difference between her sister and herself were Mr. Balfour and myself. I am more interested in the resemblance, which lay in a common largeness of heart, rapidity of intuition and freedom from the trammels of convention.

I also foregathered much at this time with old Sam Ward, the universal "uncle," from America, who had a certain number of devoted friends in England, and had finally settled down in rooms above Sotheran's in Piccadilly. He had been, or had done, so people said, most things in an adventurous life, and undoubtedly had reigned for a considerable period at Washington as King of the Lobby. Several fortunes had passed through his hands to disappear one after another, but out of the last wreck his lawyer took pleasure in announcing that he had saved enough to ensure Uncle Sam having a good dinner for the rest of his life. And no one enjoyed a good dinner more. Whatever had been secured upon him, he shared royally with his friends, whom he loved to entertain. He was one of the last of the generation that quoted Horace, in which tradition I had myself also been brought up. An admirable raconteur, he had an endless repertoire of reminiscences and adventures. Whenever I felt depressed I used to go and dine with him, and seventy and three-and-twenty spent a cheerful evening together. One night he took me to supper with Irving behind the scenes at the Lyceum, where with the merry veteran Toole, Yates of the *World* and W. L. Courtney, who had lately forsaken Oxford for London, our host entertained us till 3 a.m. It was at a dinner given by Sam Ward at the "Blue Posts" in Cork Street, that I first met Marion Crawford, of whom I was to see much in later years, sitting between him and Henry James, who enlarged on his admiration for Zola. Crawford was Uncle Sam's real nephew, and not like the rest of us only one by adoption. He had just written his first novel at Sam Ward's suggestion. It was produced in forty-two days, and was attracting much attention. In his second book, *Dr. Claudius*, he gave an

admirable portrait of his uncle, who appears appropriately as Uncle Hector.

I remember that when our prolonged banquet broke up I wandered away with Crawford in search of adventure. Eventually we found ourselves in the parlour of a tavern in Covent Garden, allowed to remain open all night for the drivers of the vegetable carts, of which privilege the night-birds and late drinkers took advantage. Crawford was collecting types and we found not a few there. They had to be propitiated and my new friend fortunately had a head as strong as his body. It was daylight when we separated. I sent him a Bacchanalian Ode congratulating him on his pastmastership in the cult of Bacchus, and received from him the following somewhat libellous reply. "Your hymn *ad majorem gloriam Bacchi* reached me yesterday and is a masterpiece. Not that you need knuckle down in that fashion. If long practice has given me a certain command of the subject, I must acknowledge that your natural gifts are surprising. In a long life you may hope to order a good number of shutters for your friends. It is at present with you a remarkable if somewhat untrained gift. The position of cupbearer to his majesty our king and uncle, which I have held more than once for six months at a time, would raise you to wonderful perfection. Omar Khayyám would soon stand to you in the relation of a spot of candle-grease to the gleaming torch of liberty, and the American eagle would hide his diminished cocktail—I suppose he *is* a cock eagle and not a hen—before the grander plumage of his victor. . . . You will not publish this letter in *The Times*? Rather deposit it in the archives of the F.O. Nobody will ever find it there."

I had the privilege of bringing Uncle Sam and Laura Tennant together, and the friendship which resulted between the dear old man who was spending his last years in making other people happy and the wonderful woman-child was delightful to witness for the short time it lasted. All her letters to him were given to me after his death. They are—



as indeed every one of her letters was—touched with her own individuality and charm of expression. In one of them, chosen at random and mostly about books, the following passage is characteristic : “ Everything to do with Emerson fascinates me. I was reading Ireland’s recollections of the great Prose Poet and came upon your name. I felt so happy that I knew you, for you knew him and he loved you. I wish you would talk to me about him some day. I never manage to ask you half the questions that lie like sealed letters in my heart waiting for your sympathetic fingers to open them. . . . I read very few French novels, for on the whole they bring earth nearer than heaven, and there is so much in common life that does that. What I should like to do if I wrote a book would be to write something that was a Bridge to the City of God, a bridge over which the poorest and the children could pass without paying a toll. Good-night, dearest Uncle Sam.”

Euthanasia came to our old friend at last as he sat in an arm-chair looking at the sunset at Pegli on the Mediterranean shore. I had written to tell Laura the circumstances of his death and she replied : “ Your letter was a great comfort. I cannot feel with our beloved poet (Shelley) that all we loved of him should be, but for our grief, as if it had not been. I feel he is as he always was, very near and helpful and true, with his face that smiled on every one and his hands that blessed the whole world and his heart that refused no one. Oh ! why did I not show him more and better how dear he was to me. What is the good of regretting ! And yet I often feel that the kings of my life pass uncrowned and the stars unblessed.”

With the exception of Lord Rosebery, Lord Crewe and one or two more of my own generation there can be few alive now in this country or even in the United States who still preserve an affectionate memory of old Uncle Sam. But the famous war hymn of his sister, Harriet Ward Beecher, remains one of the immortal possessions of the American people. To me it is a pleasure and a duty to place this

tributary wreath upon one of the many graves which I keep in mind upon the night of All Souls.

Early in 1883 I first became acquainted with Mr. Gladstone in the ever hospitable house of Mr. F. Leveson Gower at Holmbury, where he was spending Saturday to Monday with his wife and daughter (Mrs. Drew). Lowell was the other guest of importance. The Prime Minister was in great spirits, and talked on every kind of subject, from the rapacity of publishers to the Channel Tunnel, which he said he would never oppose. He was in the minority in those days. George and I were quite young men, and therefore only listeners. But Lowell was of an age and calibre to enter the lists with the great man, and it was good to hear them together. Mr. G. had much to say to us the first evening of Carlyle, who would, he thought, be held in memory chiefly on account of his extraordinary personality. He compared him to Johnson, in whom the human side was far more interesting than the literary. Lowell considered that Carlyle was somewhat belittled by what he called his Scottish money-craving weakness ; there was evidence of this in his correspondence with Emerson and at his death he left forty-five thousand pounds. The influence of Sunday seemed to have an effect on Mr. Gladstone's trend of mind, for at lunch he entertained us with ecclesiastical conversation, discussing Welsh Churchmen, American Episcopalians and the Salvation Army. He had sympathy with the endeavour of its organizers to reach the soul of the masses, but he gravely criticized what he described as the substitution of eccentricities for the fixed rules of religion. The movement was then only in its infancy. At dinner the conversation took a more congenial literary turn. He had just been reading Crawford's *Mr. Isaacs*, which, he admitted, was a remarkable book, but not one which commanded his sympathy. He held its basis to be a false philosophy, and he deprecated the attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable. I should have liked to protest against what seemed a narrow view, for the philosophy of that book, if indeed it was meant



to embody any philosophic idea, was that the big men of every race, however widely differentiated, when their souls are touched are alike in feeling, conceive the same nobilities and see the same right and wrong. Mr. G. spoke with great admiration of Charlotte Brontë. But he had no good word to say for *Wuthering Heights*. Here Lowell joined issue and with insistence. Both, however, agreed in their verdict on Scott, and both held the *Bride of Lammermoor* to be his masterpiece. Mr. Gladstone could only compare it to a Greek Tragedy. Æschylus, had he lived in modern times, might have written just such a book. This was the first of a series of such meetings at Holmbury with Mr. Gladstone, of whom perhaps I saw more than any of my young contemporaries except George Leveson Gower, who as his assistant private secretary was in constant intercourse with him.

About a year later I had been spending Easter at Holmbury, where Lord and Lady Granville were staying, and was invited to return there for the following week-end when the Gladstones were to join the party, as well as Sir George Dasent, who was the best of company. I had in the meantime joined the Foreign Office in July, 1883, and was then employed in the Western Department with my friend Cecil Spring-Rice, so I went down to Holmbury laden with boxes for the Secretary of State.

Mr. Gladstone was then full of the lost Atlantis, and maintained that the "Challenger" soundings had established the fact of a submerged continent. He had been in correspondence with Ignatius Donnelly, who wrote the suggestive book *Ragnarok*. He submitted as a parallel in popular tradition, of which all historic trace had been lost and which yet proved ultimately well-founded, the Homeric idea that the flat area of North Germany was all sea, which it undoubtedly had once been, though ages before Homer. The conversation passed on to geology, and then to language and etymology, which was Dasent's particular subject. He suggested as a parallel to the accepted dictum that the

purest English was spoken at Inverness, where it was originally an alien language, the case of Hanover where the effort to correct a bad local dialect had resulted in the popularization of the purest German.

The first evening Mr. G. was in a humorous vein. He had been playing a rubber with Lord Granville and his host, in the midst of which I heard him descanting on the origin and nature of Protestantism. *A propos* of which he told how one day a certain Damascus Jew presented himself at the British Consulate and asked for British protection on the ground that he was a Protestant. How so, they asked, why do you call yourself a Protestant? "I eat pork," was the answer, "and I don't believe in God."

He was greatly concerned at the late census returns in France, where one-seventh of the population had, he maintained, entered themselves as without religious belief; "*a vurry* significant fact." But what to me was most interesting on this occasion was the manner in which his cordial antipathy to Disraeli betrayed itself more than once in conversation, perhaps almost unconsciously. He observed one day at breakfast that he thought the Liberal party had produced more black sheep than the Conservatives. "I will give them credit," he said with sonorous emphasis, "sorry as I am to have to say it, for less personal ambition, for greater disinterestedness than has been displayed in the party which I have the honour to lead"; adding after a very slight pause, "except in one illustrious instance."

Later in the day Disraeli had actually come under discussion and Sir George Dasent had been describing the flow of eloquence that had poured from his lips at a Royal Academy banquet, where he enlarged upon the inspiration which it was to him to come year by year and feast his eyes upon these triumphs of British Art. When they were walking round the rooms afterwards, Dasent felt a hand upon his shoulder, and heard the voice of Dizzy whispering in his ear: "Did you ever see such a collection of rubbish in your life?" "Did he say that?" exclaimed Mr. G. "Oh



dear! oh dear! oh dear!" "Yes," replied Sir George, "rather funny, wasn't it?" "Funny! you call it," the old man thundered indignantly; "I call it devilish."

This incident the significance of which impressed me and led me to recount it to a good many people at the time, formed the subject many years afterwards of a long correspondence in the *Spectator*, in which the various letter writers who claimed a sort of proprietary right in Gladstonian reminiscences took an active part. None of them were able to trace the story to the fountain head, though there was a general idea that it had been disseminated by Robert Browning. I may have told it in his presence, or one of the others may have so repeated it to him. When the discussion was over I informed the Editor of the *Spectator* of the circumstances, which I am perhaps the only one now alive to recall, as Sir George Leveson Gower does not himself remember the incident.

Further conversation on books led to a general expression of appreciation of the romance which never ended, like *The Three Musketeers* with its sequels, and Lord Granville told a tale of the elder Dumas being asked by a friend after dining at a rather no-account party whether he had enjoyed himself. Dumas replied: "I should have been dreadfully bored if I had not been there myself." Finally I remember that when Dasent spoke of the passing of youth and how it was to be regretted, Mr. Gladstone dissented and, turning to me with a very kindly smile said: "No. All that you have we have had, and all the rest beside."

Reading over my diaries of that time I realize the impression which the strong personality of the Prime Minister made upon me when I was twenty-three, as it did on men of a much older generation. But looking back on these and subsequent opportunities which I had for listening to his conversation and speeches, I have little doubt that this influence was not so much the effect of what he said as of the way in which he said it. His massive leonine head compelled regard. It was the flashing eye, the deep sonorous voice and

the carefully balanced emphasis which made his utterance appear so authoritative and carried the hearer away quite independently of the thought or matter of his discourse.

Browning himself I met for the first time in 1883 at a dinner with Mr. Graham, where indeed I had also first seen Laura Tennant, the friend of his two then unmarried daughters Lady Horner and Lady Jekyll. His house in Grosvenor Place was full, not only of old Italian pictures, but of the works of Burne-Jones whose friend and patron he had always been, as well as of Rossetti. Browning was so eminently normal in conversation and appearance that it was difficult to conceive him as having affected an eccentricity of dress in early youth, as I had heard he did from my mother, who remembered meeting him and Tennyson at the very beginning of their career. He was however full of interesting reminiscences, and that evening there was much discussion of Rossetti. Browning regarded him as having in his latter days lost his mental balance, and he had some strange stories to tell in confirmation of his view. I was interested to hear the opinion of my host, than whom no one should have known better, that those weird women of his later pictures did not represent the real Rossetti. "They were only his illusions, yes, illusions," he said in his dreamy way. There was a curious fascination about that generous devotee of art, with the keen sensitive face and rather long white hair, and as a tribute to the memory of one for whom I felt sincere regard I would like to recall a story of him which was told me by Burne-Jones himself. He had just completed a very beautiful conception of the Christ in a blue glory of angels. Graham was very anxious to acquire it. But that was not possible, as it had already been disposed of. As a Scotchman Graham had no doubt been trained in the strictest tradition of puritan convention, and yet he was able to say; "I wish I could have had that picture. I should like to have sent it to the Pope at Rome."

The work at the Foreign Office was not particularly thrilling during the period of my employment there, a little



under a year. Sir Julian, afterwards Lord Pauncefoot, was the permanent under-secretary; Sir Thomas, now Lord, Sanderson was Lord Granville's private secretary. Sir Philip, afterwards Lord Currie, was assistant under-secretary. It was at dinner in his rooms that I first met Violet Fane (Mrs. Singleton), the future Lady Currie, whose *Adventures of a Savage* I had read with delight. Many years later I was to serve under their rule at the Embassy at Rome, as also for a time under Lord Bertie, who in my Foreign Office days directed the Eastern Department, and tempered his impeccable official precision and extremely able superintendence of public affairs with a crudity and licence of expression in personal relations which lifted the hair of the newly joined.

The head of my Department, the Western, retired soon after I had joined and we were then under the orders of an amiable gentleman whose somewhat pompous and pedantic habit of speech appealed to our sense of humour and offered great opportunities for the exercise of Bertie's caustic humour. Among many utterances with which he was credited I particularly remember the following, which betrayed a singular lacuna in the knowledge of a man who was generally well-informed. Some years earlier the late Lord Salisbury had in a much-discussed speech compared his former colleague Lord Derby to Titus Oates. Our worthy senior, reading the speech at his club, assumed a puzzled look and, walking across to an acquaintance, pointed to the passage with these remarkable words: "I have heard of Pontius Pilate, but who is Titus O-A-Tees?"

Our duties, those of Cecil Spring-Rice and myself in the junior room, were confined to ciphering, keeping the current archives and copying out for signature the despatches prepared by our betters. It was also our duty to close and seal the bags carried all over Europe by the Queen's Messengers, as they were then called. A certain halo of prestige still clung to the career of the messenger, dating from the time when communications were difficult, especially in the Balkans,

and they were allowed a large latitude in the arrangements and the disbursements for their journeys. Many were the stories attaching to the memory of one Cecil Johnson, whose braggadocio manner carried him far, and who would stride down Dover pier arrayed in a flowing cloak, with his silver greyhound badge round his neck, and a string of porters following, clearing his way with "Room for Her Majesty's despatches!" Another well-known figure in European capitals was "Beauty" Stephens, who had spent some thirty years in the Foreign Office copying despatches in a large round hand and declining—he was not seriously pressed—to be promoted to what he called "head work." There was Leeds, whom we christened the "suburban entertainer," because of his skill as an after-dinner conjurer. He had also learned the trick of making the spinning needle stop at his half-crown at minor race-meetings, and was generally invited quietly by the proprietor or his confederate to move on and leave honest men to make their living. There was Lumley, who had succeeded in obtaining a commission in the German army in 1870 and joined his regiment in a bowler hat just in time to take part in the charge of Spicheren. There was Johnny Woodford, who had been Mario's pupil and could still produce the ghost of a voice in the tradition of a wonderful school. These and many more were welcomed by us at our various posts about the world with the latest news and papers from home. They are all gone now, and the humours and glories of the road are gone with them. Among those in the Foreign Office with whom I formed abiding friendship was Willie Compton, afterwards Marquess of Northampton. He took me for the first time to stay with his sister at Panshanger to see the great pictures. There I met Robert, Lord Lytton, who had known my mother in early youth. He talked to me most interestingly all through one evening about oriental religions, and then about poetry, taking up the curious standpoint that the outcry against imitation was unreasonable. Shakespeare had borrowed, just as the post-Elizabethans had borrowed



again from him. All poets had absorbed the ideas of their predecessors, and there was little they could do but say the same thing differently. In fact he held the view that Mr. Kipling holds of Homer, "He took what he required, just the same as me."

The life of London in the 'eighties with all its interesting personalities had taken a firm hold upon me when the time came to leave it behind. 40 Grosvenor Square was the centre of interest, and all that was live and modern in the social world, including its political and intellectual elements, seemed to be drawn by some compelling attraction to the home of Laura and Margot Tennant, and their elder married sisters. I well remember, as the younger of the two drove me home on a May afternoon in 1884, a few hours before my departure from England, the feeling that I was stepping off into a new world and wondering whether it would in any way make up for the old one that I was leaving.

## CHAPTER II

### BERLIN, 1884-1885

In May, 1884 I was directed to join the Embassy at Berlin, an instruction which at the time I received without great enthusiasm, though it was undoubtedly an advantage to begin diplomatic life at an important Embassy rather than at a small Legation. I arrived there in June. Berlin was then a much more modest capital than it became by the end of the century, and lacking in individuality. A disappointing first impression was redeemed by the moment of the year. The lime trees were in bloom and their perfume was in the air along the famous avenue leading from the Brandenburg gate to the Schloss. The Thiergarten with its shady alleys was then unadorned with the theatrical statues with which the last Hohenzollern Emperor so profusely endowed it, and only the monument erected after 1870, generally known by a German combination word as the Asparagus of Victory, revealed the impotence of modern monumental conception to rise to a great occasion.

The Ambassador, Lord Ampthill, was already established for the summer at his villa at Potsdam, to which colony of palaces and barracks I was taken on the afternoon of my arrival by the Counsellor, or as we then called him the Secretary of Embassy, afterwards our Ambassador in Russia, Sir Charles Scott. We visited Sans-Souci and looked with respect at the historic mill. The apes and parrots still grimacing on the walls of Voltaire's room were suggestive of its sometime guest and reminiscent of the strange camaraderie of two eccentric men of genius. The Watteaus, Lancrets and Paters were delightful. But I had not yet learned to



appreciate the charm of roccoco, and took only a moderate interest in the exiguous washing apparatus and the venerable toothbrush of the Great Frederick, whose favourite residence seemed a very modest establishment for so great a man. We went to tea with the Amptills, who were most cordial and made me feel quite at home in spite of the inevitable awe with which a modest attaché naturally regards the formidable presence of his Ambassador. But there never lived a kindlier chief, or a more attractive personality than Odo Russell, who for me had long been enrolled in the band of famous men. I have known many ambassadors since, but none perhaps so admirably equipped to occupy a post to which he did honour. As a linguist he was remarkable, and his knowledge extended also to the literature of the four languages which he spoke with equal facility. A profound student of Dante he was equally familiar with the whole bibliography of Goethe. He gave to all impartially the best of his singularly gifted mind with a natural and unself-assertive charm of expression which was entirely winning. He may have had his enemies and critics, but I never met them, and during the three months of our intercourse I could not detect the place which might have invited attack. His popularity in Berlin was unquestioned, as it had been in Rome during the thirteen years which he spent in that city, where indeed I think he had left his heart. I remember one evening in the garden at Potsdam observing to him that the miniature Dome of the Garrison Church as seen framed in the trees reminded me of the form of the dome of St. Peter's, and he said that it had actually been built on those lines and that he often came and sat in that part of the garden and played with the illusion that he was once more looking from the Pincio into the Roman sunset. I told him of my childhood's recollections of Pius IX descending from his gilded coach to walk on the Hill of Gardens, and that elicited an interesting Roman experience from his store of memories. Not long after his marriage he was on the Pincio with his wife and the late Lord Acton. It must have been

soon after the definite rupture of the Vatican with Döllinger and the Old Catholics. Pius IX, who was walking through the gardens just as I had seen him among the kneeling people, and blessing them as he passed with the two first fingers of the right hand, perceived Lord Odo and his wife and with a smile of recognition gave them a special benediction. Then he caught sight of Acton, and suddenly changing his hand from the vertical to the horizontal position he made that rapid shaking movement of the first and second fingers by which the Italian signifies negation. "No blessing for you, my friend," was indicated by the gesture with painful distinctness.

Lord Odo had always enjoyed a privileged position with Pius IX, who had a great sense of humour. At one moment when the Pope was very displeased with the British Government he had gone to Castel Gandolfo, the summer villa, for an interview. He had dropped on his knee in accordance with the etiquette of the Papal Court, whereupon Pius placed a hand upon his shoulder, and kept him kneeling throughout the interview, with a merry twinkle in his eye. "Ah, my son," he said at the end of the audience, "I wish you were a Catholic. I should send you for a fortnight's penance to the Monastery at Genzano. It would do you a world of good."

Almost simultaneously with myself there arrived as an attaché at the Italian Embassy in Berlin the Marchese Imperiali, a warm-hearted high-spirited Neapolitan gentleman with whom I have maintained a lifelong friendship ever since. By a curious coincidence we, who began our diplomatic careers abroad almost on the same day, ended them as Ambassadors in each other's respective countries throughout the Great War. He learned to understand us as few Italian representatives have ever done, and we owe him no small debt for the faithful manner in which he interpreted the British mentality to his Government. The Ampthills asked me to bring him to dinner at Potsdam, whither I went two or three evenings every week, and we had an Italian



evening with more reminiscences from my chief. He told us of the genesis of the post in Rome which he had occupied so long. Somewhere about 1820 a secretary at the Legation at Munich who was in delicate health migrated to Italy. From Rome he wrote despatches to the Foreign Office, which were found so interesting that on his death a semi-official successor, Petre, was appointed, followed by Lord Lyons and subsequently by Odo Russell. After the entry of the King of Italy in 1870 this semi-official representation at the Vatican came to an end.

On his way to Rome in 1858 Lord Odo had stopped in Piedmont. There he was presented to Cavour, who told him there would be war the following year, for it was their intention to put the Italian question to the issue. Lord Odo replied that if Piedmont attacked Austria she would antagonize the feeling of Europe. "But," said Cavour, "suppose we make Austria attack us." He inquired whether this would be possible. "Yes," was the answer, "but not yet, we shall not be ready till next year. The best campaigning season begins in May. Austria will attack us then." Lord Odo admitted that he thought Cavour was deluding himself and he wrote home in that sense. But Austria declared war on the 3rd of May, 1859, in accordance with Cavour's programme.

Cardinal Antonelli was not, he said, the power many people believed him to be, he was only the faithful servant of Pio Nono, who was really his own Minister and a pretty astute one. As an instance of his ready resource the ambassador told us how, when the French were exercising an unwelcome pressure, the Cardinal Secretary of State was instructed to produce the text of a message from Lord Palmerston offering the Pope a British ship and an asylum in Malta in the event of Garibaldi reaching Rome. The flourish of this document in the face of the French representative was accompanied with an observation that France was not their only protector.

Nor was the venerable Pontiff deficient in presence of

mind. Once during a great ceremony in St. Peter's at which Pius was himself officiating a man committed suicide in the basilica in a fit of religious excitement. He was carried out and at the first opportunity the unpleasant news was whispered to the Pope, who was seen to fold his hands, to say something in a low voice and then to cross himself. In that brief moment he had re-consecrated the Church.

The Embassy at Berlin was, as it still is, an unattractive residence, acquired after the failure of the financier Strousberg, who had built it on a valuable site in the Wilhelm Strasse. But our Chancery was at that time in the Pariser Platz, on the ground floor of the Blücher Palais, almost under the shadow of the massive Brandenburg gate. The Austrian Embassy also had its Chancery on the ground floor, while the Ambassador, Count Szechenyi, occupied the first floor as his residence. Prince Blücher, whom I learned to know afterwards, only kept two or three rooms for himself and let the remainder of the vast building, a procedure which was not popular in Berlin, as it was generally understood that he had been granted a loan from the Crown Trust at one and a half or two per cent. in order to build it, on the plea that if the great Silesian Nobles were to come to Berlin to live, as the old emperor desired, they must have suitable residences worthy of their name and position. Prince Blücher, then a widower but subsequently twice remarried, was an amiable man in his eccentric way, but notorious for his closeness in money matters. When an income tax was eventually imposed he left his country for good and took up his residence in one of the smaller Channel Islands.

A few days after my arrival the military Attaché, Colonel, afterwards General, Sir Leopold Swaine, took me to the Neues Palais at Wildpark, near Potsdam, the summer residence of the Crown Prince Frederick. The Crown Princess invited members of our Embassy to play tennis there and remain to supper once or twice every week. This was my introduction to a long series of similar pleasant parties, at which all ceremony was dispensed with. Vivid still remains the im-



pression made upon me by the Crown Prince when for the first time I saw him approaching the tennis ground with his four Italian greyhounds, a splendid figure of dignified manhood, radiating kindness with a friendly smile. One had only to see him to understand that his influence had been exerted, so far as his authority extended with his own army, on the side of humanity and in the defence of historic monuments during the war of '70. At supper, an unconventional meal, which began with curded milk and tea and went on to hot dishes and wine, I sat next to the Crown Princess and fell at once under the charm of one of the most cultivated women I have ever met, whose intelligent eyes had an irresistible appeal in them. The three unmarried daughters were present, and the simple natural intercourse of that happy family circle disarmed any shyness incidental to a first meeting. Free of address and inviting unrestricted discussion, the Crown Princess had nevertheless that unconscious habit of Royalty, the prerogative of always being right, as I was to learn without delay. She had been speaking of Marcus Aurelius, one of her enthusiasms, and expressed regret at having only read his works in translation and not in the original Latin. Not being as yet a courtier and only concerned with the truth, I did not hesitate to suggest that the imperial philosopher wrote in Greek, to which the Crown Princess rejoined that of course the original text was Greek, which she could never be expected to understand, but that she might have hoped to read a contemporary Latin version. My indiscretion was, however, not resented, and thus began an association which endured over many years. I little anticipated then the tragedy I was soon to witness and all the vicissitudes which were to bring me into such close relations with the royal hostess of Wildpark. After supper the Crown Prince talked to me for a long time about art and Italy, the country of his dreams and happy holidays.

On some of these afternoons Prince William and his brother Prince Henry would appear. The latter was very

popular with all our staff. The elder brother was less easy to know, though he displayed a somewhat boisterous geniality. It might gratify a certain mentality to be smitten from behind with a tennis racquet by a future emperor, but on the other hand such gratification was qualified by the fact that the blow could not be returned. More occasionally there were water parties on the lakes, where the Embassy maintained a four and a pair, and Prince William pulled a creditable stroke with one arm, the muscles of which were abnormally developed. The atrophied left arm was of little service, but with characteristic determination he had learned to make the right do the service of both.

In the presence of his parents Prince William showed a certain constraint. He had been brought up in a rather severe atmosphere of domestic criticism and an observer could not help noticing that tension existed. In the concluding volume of Bismarck's autobiography there is a letter from the Crown Prince Frederick to the Chancellor, the publication of which was due to, but not justified by, the resentment of the latter towards the sovereign who had dismissed him. This personal letter, which refers to certain qualities of vanity and presumption and "an overweening estimation of himself" in the son, reveals that his relations with his father had not been altogether harmonious. Nor does the letter addressed to the Chancellor on November 29th, 1887, by Prince Wilhelm himself in which he prematurely discusses the attitude he should adopt towards the Princes of the German Empire in the not impossible eventuality of his father's death, convey a very pleasant impression. The ex-Emperor and his mother were in certain respects temperamentally too much alike ever to get on. She was an idealist, lacking in worldly wisdom, and therefore often indiscreet. The ex-Emperor was also an idealist, but his idealism was vitiated by a self-assurance which did not allow him to question the rightness of his own conclusions. Both were impetuous and impatient of opposition.

Looking back to those old times when I knew him and saw



much of those who were in constant relations with him, I am confirmed in the view that, in accordance with a certain religious strain in his character, the ex-Emperor went through the greater part of his life firmly resolved to avoid war and seeing the best prospect of doing so in assuring the absolute military security of his country. For many years the dominant position which his ambition demanded for Germany was sought for in economic development. But the vanity which characterized his references to himself as the Supreme War Lord and the Admiral of the Atlantic played into the hands of those who wanted war, and who for years had been instilling into the German people the suggestion of their ultimate destiny as the arbiters of the world. Throughout, even though desiring peace, he gave every encouragement to those whose aim was war. You cannot continually sail too near the wind without being responsible for the consequences. With the steady increase of the Socialist vote the ascendancy over him of the war party increased in proportion. His own son openly declared for them, and a rivalry ensued which menaced the popularity of the sovereign among the very people whose support was indispensable to him. It would seem almost possible to indicate the precise moment when this change of mentality began.

The Crown Prince's household was controlled by the competent Count Seckendorff, who had as a comparatively junior officer accompanied Lord Napier's expedition to Abyssinia in 1867. He was a most accomplished man, with a great knowledge of art, and a fair artist himself. His ascendancy in the household was often criticized in Germany. In any case he was a most loyal and devoted friend to his royal master and mistress in the days when friends were few, and through all the stormy vicissitudes of 1888, when his position was a very difficult one, he showed a wise and brave discretion.

The even tenor of our relations with Germany was at this period beginning to be ruffled by the new ambitions

of Hamburg and Bremen for colonial expansion, ambitions which were warmly advocated in the country and which finally received the militant support of Bismarck. The question, which became acute in this year 1884, will be dealt with a little later on. A settlement of one of the first issues which arose out of the German occupation of Angra Pequena had just been concluded, and the German press was quoting the Cape newspapers as having expressed satisfaction. Lord Ampthill, who came up almost daily to Berlin, observed to me that little value could be attached to such quotations from the South African press. The Bismarckian method was to have articles written and get them inserted by such means as were open to him in the press of all nations. These articles were then quoted in German official papers as expressing the feeling of the country in which they had been published. The sixteen million thalers confiscated from the King of Hanover and devoted to Secret Service were freely used for such purposes. He had himself, he said, a rooted antipathy to the use of secret service funds, and did not believe in the trustworthiness of any information so obtained. This was indeed the tradition in the diplomatic service in my time. The Russians had an ingenious method of turning the anxious credulity of certain foreign representatives to account for the benefit of the State. It was Prince Bismarck himself who had explained to him their method. They kept a regular staff of officials whose business it was to allow themselves to be bought by foreign diplomatists. These officials were supplied with certain information which might be revealed without compromising any real interest, and they would meet foreign diplomatists by appointment in secret places with a great deal of mystery and "place the goods," to the great advantage of the management as well as of the state chest.

At the same time the Russians were undoubtedly adepts themselves in obtaining possession of the most confidential documents. Herbert Bismarck told me that while he was



counsellor at the German Embassy at St. Petersburg a very high Russian official, in fact an Under Secretary of State, came to his Embassy and divulged a step which he said the Russian Government would shortly take. He made this disclosure because as a Russian patriot he was convinced that it was a most unfortunate measure and he was anxious for his country's sake to see it forestalled and rendered impracticable. It was in Germany's power to do so and the information was of great value to her. The Russian official observed: "I presume you will telegraph what I have told you to Berlin," and Herbert Bismarck replied he would certainly do so at once. "In that case," the Russian said, "I must beg you not to make use of ciphers a, b, c, or d," mentioning the numbers of four of their cipher books, "for we have all those, and as the information I have given you is at present only known to the Emperor, my chief and myself, if you use any of those it will be realized that I must have betrayed it." Incidentally thus Herbert Bismarck obtained two very valuable pieces of information at the same time.

The friction which had arisen over Colonial issues made it difficult for the Ambassador to carry out a cure at Marienbad, which had become an annual indispensable routine, and in the latter part of August he became seriously indisposed. On the 25th a telegram from Potsdam informed us that the illness had taken a very grave turn, and a little later in the day another telegram announced the tragic news of his end. I have seldom witnessed such genuine demonstrations of feeling and sympathy as were aroused by the untimely death at fifty-four of this remarkable and wholly lovable man. The venerable Emperor, to whom Swaine broke the news, burst into tears, and said there was not one among his own personal officers whom he trusted or respected more. The Crown Prince, whom I received and accompanied to the coffin, exclaimed: "You do not know what this means for the Crown Princess and myself. We shall have to begin a new life now." The Ambassador's

home had been an oasis where they could escape from the artificialities of Court life and be simple human beings. Hatzfeldt, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, spoke of his death as an irreparable loss to Germany and recalled the efforts he had made to establish a good understanding. Count Szechenyi, the Austrian Ambassador, who had known him from boyhood, rushed back from Hungary, whither he had just gone for his holiday, in order to be present at the final leave-taking at Charlottenburg, when the body was sent back to England for burial. In the streets at Berlin I overheard men speaking of him with sympathy and regard. In those days international rivalry, so far as we were concerned, had not penetrated into the popular mind. World dominion or downfall had not yet become the watch-word, and there was no general ill-will to Great Britain, though the process of its fabrication was soon to begin. Before I left Berlin the University lectures of Treitschke with their malignant denunciations of the piratical British Empire were already drawing crowded audiences and his Catonic reiteration of *Delenda est* was instilling a tendentious poison.

Lord Amthill was succeeded by Sir Edward Malet, Minister in Brussels after his stormy experiences in Egypt. He arrived in October, 1884, and at once invited me to act as his private secretary. He was by far the youngest of our Ambassadors and had been born in the service, his father having also been a diplomatist. Bismarck had been intimate with the family at Frankfort in the days of the Bund in the 'fifties and had known Edward Malet as a boy. They had met again under strange circumstances during the campaign of 1870, when Malet had been left with one or two Secretaries in charge of the Embassy at Paris and the archives while Lord Lyons, the Ambassador, followed the French Government to Bordeaux. He had been instructed in September, 1870, to carry the letter through the German lines to Bismarck which eventually led to the celebrated interview between the Chancellor and M. Jules Favre at Ferrières. His adventurous expedition from the



besieged city to the German headquarters is described in a very interesting pamphlet which was privately printed in the following year.

Some ten days after Malet's arrival in Berlin the Chancellor came to see him. He did not on that occasion say much about political affairs. But he referred to the difficulties which had arisen over Colonial issues. He complained of our system which, he maintained, enabled two different departments like the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office to take divergent views, so that the language held by one Minister afforded no guarantee for the action of the other. But he admitted that the German people had taken the bit in their teeth and had gone beyond what he had believed to be opportune. This confirmed the view which Lord Ampthill had reported of Bismarck's own attitude towards Colonial expansion.

Visits from the Chancellor were very exceptional and we young men had few opportunities of meeting the great man, who lived his own life and did exactly as he pleased. His health was not good, and his medical adviser, Schweniger, had compelled him to greatly simplify existence and indulge less in the strong meats and drinks which Prussians of the old school were apt to abuse. He seldom went out in the social world and on the only occasion on which he dined quite privately at the Embassy during my four years in Berlin, I was unfortunately absent on leave. My brother-in-law (General Stuart-Wortley) who was staying with the Malets at the time, told me that after dinner he sat down at the piano and entertained them by singing some old English ballads of the 'fifties. No doubt the excuse of indifferent health was useful to enable him to escape from the importunate. He once told Lord Ampthill that he had devised an infallible method for terminating a tedious official interview. When his wife thought that a visitor had been with him long enough she would look in at the door and remind him that the time had come to take his medicine. On that occasion he had hardly explained the

method when the Princess appeared bottle in hand, and Amphyll laughingly took the hint in spite of the Chancellor's protestations.

Germany was entering a new phase of industrialism, and conditions were extremely interesting. The Emperor, whom I saw for the first time close at hand when the new Ambassador was ceremoniously received for the presentation of his letters on October 24th, was a very old man, with the eyes sunken in their hollows, and evidently approaching the term of his long life. The big men who had made Germany politically in the latter half of the nineteenth century were still alive. Moltke was as old as the century. General Manteuffel, the Red Prince and the Crown Prince Frederick were the other surviving field-marshal of the war of '70. Ranke, Mommsen and Gregorovius were still active. Bismarck was nearing the threescore years and ten. But his brain was not less vigorously constructive. The capital of the country was rapidly passing into the hands of a limited number of Jews of enormous wealth, as industry encroached upon the old agricultural interest. The Chancellor and those who followed him believed the remedy to lie in state-socialism. He would, he said, fight no more wars. He desired no further aggrandisement. The Germanic populations of Russia and Austria were more useful to him under actual conditions, as an influence over those two empires, than they would be if absorbed into the German state. He appeared to believe in the possibility of building up a vast practical organization in which the state would become the great capitalist. But the Bismarckian system depended for success on a single masterful personality, rather than on essential principles, and tended to ignore the human element. The man who can dominate all the intelligence of a country for his own ends occurs but once in a century, and his very prepotency had withdrawn responsibility from all who might have become rivals, so that the ship of state would inevitably be without a helmsman of experience when he himself should disappear.



Sir Edward Malet, who had been brought up in the school of Lord Lyons, was for his juniors an ideal chief. The old Embassy stables were reconstructed to form offices, and the chancery was transferred thither from the Pariser Platz. He established a sort of club room for the bachelor members of the staff, who dined with him almost every night, and converted an old house which he leased from the Crown on one of the Potsdam lakes into comfortable summer quarters. Social life in Berlin still retained something of its old-world character. It took some little time to penetrate, but to us people were very cordial. The older generation used to assemble in a limited number of houses after dinner, where hostesses had fixed dates for weekly receptions. Such hospitality was regularly dispensed by the "three sisters" who played an important part in Berlin life, Countess Perponcher, Frau von Prillwitz and Countess Danckelmann. Grizzled generals whose names recalled the campaign of '70 would meet there, drink beer and eat caviare, sausages and other strong-tasting delicacies. Count Perponcher was the Oberhaus und Hofmarshal of the Court, a tall commanding figure who dyed his moustache and a few sparse locks, carried in a volute over his bald head, jet black, not without a certain dispersion of colour on the cranium. He was an elderly beau, with the deportment of a big gendarme and magnificent at the head of the Court processions with his white wand of office. There was a numerous group of Radziwils, whose social chief was Prince Antoine, the old Emperor's favourite A.D.C., the son of a lady for whom he was reported to have had a romantic attachment in youth. Princess Antoine, née Castellane, considered her salon the most exclusive in Berlin, and it was her preliminary scrutiny that conceded or denied a social passport to the latest-joined attaché. The only son had recently married a Polish Branicka and their hospitable house was the meeting place of the younger generation who rebelled against the old conventions. Russian legislation regarding the tenure of real property compelled them eventu-

ally to adopt Russian nationality. Princess George, a real bohemian by nature, most generous in good and evil fortune, the providence of her distressed compatriots, with whom she shared the remnants of her fortune in the evil days of the great war, has remained the constant friend of a lifetime. Prominent also among the Germans of Polish origin was Count Radolinski, who left the diplomatic service in 1884 to become Court Marshal to the Crown Prince. He belonged to the old Polish family of Koszutski which received the title of Count Radolin-Radolinski from Frederick William III in 1836. His first wife was an Englishwoman, but she was already dead when I came to Berlin. The Emperor Frederick on his accession made him a Prince, whereupon he dropped the second portion of the hyphenated name. After the Emperor Frederick's death he returned to the Diplomatic career and was successively Ambassador in Constantinople, Petersburg and Paris until 1910. There was the Duke and Duchess of Sagan, with one foot in France and one in Germany. She, wholly French by race and temperament, was the greatest of *grandes dames* in the capital, conscious of obligations and punctilious to fulfil them, with a sharp tongue and the kindest of hearts. But in the country she dressed like a gamekeeper, slung a rifle over her shoulder and with half a dozen cigars in her pocket spent the day stalking roe-deer in the Silesian forests. Their daughter, the brilliant newly married Princess Carl Egon Furstenberg, now Countess Jean de Castellane, with the young Radziwils led the revolt against the old provincialism and the habit of dining at six. The regimental messes were still at half past four or five and the theatre began very early. The old Emperor himself dined at four. These French and Polish elements, with the sons of the great houses from all parts of Germany who officered the guard regiments, gave a certain cosmopolitan colour to social life, the most representative personalities in which, the Hatzfeldts, the Hohenzollerns, the Lichnowskis and the Henckel-Donnersmarcks were widely travelled, internationally connected and by no



means essentially Prussianized. The Silesian Count Guido Henckel von Donnersmarck had in fact in his younger days been less well known in Germany than in Paris, where he compromised his magnificent estate. Its reconstruction and his eventual great wealth were largely due to the influence and ability of Madame de Paiva, famous under the Second Empire, whom he married. His second wife was a Russian, beautiful and much too unconventional for the Berlin of the 'eighties, whose friendship I greatly appreciated. The older generation of Brandenburgers somewhat mistrusted and disapproved of the greater freedom of life and manners introduced by the younger element.

Count Hatzfeldt, the former Ambassador in Turkey, and subsequently Ambassador in London, presided over the Foreign Office in the Wilhelm Strasse. He was a good tennis player, and had seldom missed his daily game at Constantinople where two or three of our staff had been posted. So in Berlin we used to play with him two or three times a week in the garden of his official residence. As we had then no ground of our own we greatly appreciated the privilege, and I am sure business did not suffer from our intimacy with the Foreign Secretary, who had a much wider outlook than the average official. So far as his influence went—for, in the last resort, the Chancellor was his own Foreign Minister—it was friendly and, if later in London he sometimes had to navigate in difficult seas, the storm was not of his making, and he poured such oil on the waters as he could.

We saw much of the younger officers of the guards, and especially of those of the Lifeguards, recruited from all parts of Germany. Among those with whom we most foregathered were Prince Henry of Battenberg, Count Münster, the Sierstorpff brothers and Baron Reischach. They made us members of their clubs and showed the most friendly hospitality to the British who were in those days regarded as nationally related. Of the elder officers we saw naturally much less, though, perhaps owing to his

having an American wife, I found myself not unfrequently in the Company of the ambitious but evangelical Waldersee, who allied himself with the political Court Chaplain Stöcker, and exercised a considerable influence during the first year of the reign of William II.

The caste system was still very strong. Only once in my four years at Berlin, and that at a party given by the Crown Prince and Princess, did I meet any number of the learned and professional class in contact with the social aristocracy. The old Brandenburg nobility had no touch with the great historians and men of letters who were then still alive. Nor had commerce, industry and finance as yet found a way into the reception rooms of privilege. A certain number of excellencies would indeed attend the gargantuan banquets offered by the great banker Bleichröder, then our consul-general, but his son could get no further in the army than to become a reserve officer in the infantry of the guards, and regimental feeling in that corps was adamantine against the reception of any elements but those of the territorial aristocracy. It was only at the palace of the heir-apparent, where love of art, a real sympathy with the intellectual movement and a wider liberal outlook on life prevailed, that it was possible occasionally to meet authors and artists, or in the house of such a broad-minded *frondeur* as George von Bunsen, who was himself somewhat of an outlaw, in consequence of his earnest opposition to the Chancellor's internal policy. I nevertheless managed to find my way into the social life which they maintained among themselves, thanks largely to the friendly courtesies of Dr. Lippmann, the keeper of the prints and drawings at the Museum, a master in his own faculty.

I well remember a most interesting evening which I spent somewhat later in company with Sir William Richmond at his hospitable house. There were present at dinner Theodor Mommsen, the historian, Bamberger, the radical deputy, Dr. Bode, the critic, Baron Richthofen, the geologist and Chinese traveller, Director Dohme, Dr.



Fränckel and others. Bamberger I knew already, a delightful talker and a great authority on French literature. Mommsen, however, I then saw for the first time. The head was strikingly remarkable, the nose sharp, prominent and inquisitive, the chin small but strong, the mouth excessively mobile and excitable. But all these features were dominated by a great calm dome-like forehead, framed in long grey hair. There was a certain likeness in the nose and brows to the portraits of Voltaire, but Mommsen's mobile mouth was not underhung. He had a soft pleasant voice, which could grow harsh and strident when he was roused. Then his dark eyes flashed and his sharp nose seemed to stab his contradictor. He had reached his seventieth birthday only a few days before, and had had seventeen children, of whom fifteen were still alive. His vitality was extraordinary. He went to bed fairly late and always rose at four. That evening he was particularly genial and gracious, correcting with a pretty manner some of my modes of expression in German, in which we chiefly conversed. But he had a reputation for extreme quickness and pugnacity in discussion and could be nothing less than offensive to those he disliked. The story was current that on the one occasion on which he met Gregorovius, the author of *The City of Rome in the Middle Ages*, of whose work he had no opinion, he observed to him: "You, Herr Gregorovius, have lived, I believe, a long time in Rome. Now a history of Rome in the Middle Ages, that would be a fine book to undertake." Notwithstanding that they had much in common in the exaltation of force over right, the name of Mommsen had always been like a red rag to the Chancellor, and we endeavoured to elicit from him how far he reciprocated this antagonism. Mommsen expressed his approval of Bismarck's foreign policy, but denounced his social system, his ban on the mixing of classes and insistence on the segregation of the military element as an exclusive caste. Probably Bismarck knew his own country best, and felt that as yet its tenure was too precarious in Europe,

and that the people were not yet ripe for the free intercourse and unrestricted exchanges of view between class and class to which we are accustomed. The masses in Berlin still struck the foreigner as lacking any natural independence. Unless instructed by the police to walk on one side or the other of the way they would shuffle all over the pavement, and did not fall instinctively into two streams as our people do. The nation was accustomed to and looked for guidance still. The party that evening for the most part belonged to the opposition and were in advance of the times. Fränckel mistrusted Bismarck's economic theories or practice. All the chances of the German Empire were calculated on success. He trembled to think of what might happen if a national crisis suspended activities for a year. They were in fact always sailing too near the wind and neglected to realize that in human affairs things have their ups and downs. Both Director Dohme and Bamberger severely criticized the German educational system, which, the former said, was lacking in originality. The German copied well, but whereas we improved on old models he only vulgarized them when he tried to do more than copy. The race was a magnificent one for breeding purposes when crossed; kept pure it was the most loutish on earth. In Prussia the intermixture with the Slavs had produced an energetic people. The Germanic stock in Lombardy, in France and in England, mixed with the Celtic or other elements, had bred races full of vitality, but it remained heavy and unintelligent in those regions where ethnologists had identified an unadulterated inbred German population. Outside the highest society, which as I have said tended to be cosmopolitan in Berlin, women played a small part and contented themselves with household duties, which they discussed over their coffee in the afternoon, leaving it to their husbands to take part alone in social intercourse. The wives were self-effacing, and in every detail of life it was the man's comfort and amusement which received consideration. A friend of mine once found himself travelling in the same



compartment with a young German professor, who was very communicative and in boisterously high spirits. He explained that he was embarking on a journey to which he had for a long time been looking forward and he added : " The fact is I have just been married and am on my honeymoon."—" On your honeymoon ? " said my friend looking at him interrogatively ; " But where then is—— ! " " Ah ! " replied the professor, " My wife ? She is not with me, *für zwei hat das Geld nicht ausgereicht.*" (It did not run to both of us travelling.)

The first African Conference, which would have to determine the status of the International Congo State and many other issues, was to meet in Berlin in the middle of November, 1884. This will therefore be an appropriate place to put on record some of the antecedents of that important gathering which directly affected our relations with Germany.

The earliest indication of any deliberate German intention to found a colony overseas which came under my personal experience had been a note received at the Foreign Office from the German Embassy in November, 1883, which passed through my hands for preliminary treatment while I was serving in that Department. It set forth the desire of a commercial house at Bremen to establish a trading station on the Bay of Angra Pequena, which is some 280 miles south of Walfisch Bay, and the inquiry was advanced with all due forms of courtesy whether the contemplated step would be in any way unwelcome to Her Majesty's Government. So far as my recollection goes, the tone of the note was studiously courteous. Having affixed to it the brief summary which was known as the docket, I took it to the head of the Western Department and observed that it appeared to me to be one of the most important communications which had come under my cognizance at the Foreign Office. It did not seem to make any great impression on my immediate official superiors, and possibly this attitude of poco-curantism was in some measure due to

Lord Ampthill's reports, which nothing had occurred to modify since the colonial question had first been discussed in 1873, when Prince Bismarck declared himself antagonistic to such adventures. The reply to this note was that British sovereignty had only been actually proclaimed at certain points such as Walfisch Bay, but that our legitimate rights would be infringed by sovereign claims between the southern point of Portuguese territory and the frontier of Cape Colony. The German Government were not satisfied with this answer and inquired in December, 1883, on what grounds our claim was based, and what means we possessed of protecting German enterprise in these regions. The Colonial Office transmitted this correspondence to the Cape Government for their views. Before it could arrive, or at any rate be considered, there was a Ministerial crisis at the Cape and many months were allowed to elapse without any notice being taken of the German communication.

Now the Chancellor was at this time contemplating new and extended financial demands on the Imperial Diet, in which there were many ardent supporters of the colonial party in Hamburg and, however distasteful the dictation of that assembly might be to his autocratic temperament, those interests had to be conciliated. The constitution of the Reichstag, against which Bismarck used frequently to inveigh in his conversations with my chief, had been one of his admitted political miscalculations. He had made up his mind that under the empire the German Princes would still remain particularist, and he had therefore recommended universal suffrage in elections for the Diet, believing that the mass of the people, favourable to imperial union, would act as a counterpoise. Experience, however, showed that while the Princes rallied loyally to the new order, the weapon which he had devised to neutralize their anticipated opposition was constantly directed against himself.

If the delay in replying to the German note regarding Angra Pequena until the month of June, 1884, appeared formally to put us in the wrong, experience showed that



the inquiries addressed to H.M. Government were themselves *ex post facto*, and it is improbable that even if an immediate answer had been forthcoming the result would have been in any way different. An expedition under Herr Lüderitz, of Bremen, had in fact landed at Angra Pequena early in 1883. He had on May 1st of that year signed a treaty with a native chief by which he obtained a sea frontage of ten miles with an inland area of some two hundred, over which the sovereign rights were ceded. When in June, 1884, the Cape Government were aroused to the gravity of the issue and signified their readiness to take over the territory and the responsibilities of Government, it was too late, and Bismarck affirmed that his only object had been to elicit a clear statement from us whether or no we had any prior claim to that area. He could not admit the establishment on our part of a Monroe doctrine for Africa.

If Angra Pequena served as a sort of test case for the establishment of a first footing in Africa it was an unprofitable venture. Bleichröder, the banker, afterwards admitted that it had cost him £10,000. Lüderitz had found the place altogether worthless, and did not intend to sink any capital there. The Chancellor had learned that he contemplated offering to sell it to us and, after all the trouble which the settlement had caused him, he was furious. So Bleichröder had to advance the money to keep the little colony going and save Bismarck from a ridiculous position. The decision of the British Government to recognize German sovereignty over the territory appeared at the moment to have re-established cordial relations.<sup>1</sup> But a similar course to that followed at Angra Pequena was only anticipated at St. Lucia Bay by the timely hoisting of the British flag, and intrigues carried on not very skilfully through Gerhard Rohlfs to create a grievance against the Sultan of Zanzibar did not escape the vigilance of Sir John Kirk, our Consul

<sup>1</sup> The rise and development of the Colonial conflict with Germany at this time may be studied in the second volume of the *Life of Lord Granville*, by Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice.

General, who was later to be sacrificed to the maintenance of the understanding with Germany. Assurances given in April, 1884, that a journey of Dr. Nachtigal in West Africa had exclusively scientific and commercial objects in view did not prevent that energetic officer from making a series of annexations. The methods by which a footing was obtained in the Cameroons, after its inhabitants had petitioned for British protection and the intention to accord it had been publicly announced ; the preliminaries to the hoisting of the German flag in New Guinea ; the pretensions advanced in Samoa ; and the questionable procedure followed in dispossessing the Sultan of Zanzibar of his mainland possessions, were further measures which revealed an aggressive disregard for British susceptibilities and were characterized by a want of frankness, which the relations ostensibly existing between the two countries did not warrant. A worse act of calculated bad faith was yet to follow. It would seem legitimate to assume that Bismarck was at the outset genuinely indisposed to encourage Colonial enterprise, and that when he so informed Lord Ampthill he was expressing a sincere conviction. But the time came when he realized that he could no longer oppose the strong current in influential quarters in favour of the establishments of outposts in undeveloped lands. He, however, gave Lord Ampthill no warning of such a change of attitude and he never made any real effort to arrive at an amicable understanding with us. Circumstances offered him an opportunity of placing Great Britain at a disadvantage. We had only recently occupied Egypt, where the growing trouble in the Soudan had added to our embarrassments. The support of Germany, which had given us every encouragement to go there, would at this critical stage have been invaluable, but the competition for colonial expansion suggested that advantage might be derived from becoming rather the ally of France in Egypt. We had also a troublesome situation to face in Central Asia, owing to Russian hostility, which there was every reason to believe Germany



was secretly promoting. To assume the part of the unappreciated friend, reluctantly compelled to fend for himself, appeared a more congenial policy than that of making frank overtures to a Gladstonian Government which Bismarck cordially disliked, especially after the first test case had proved successful. Mr. Gladstone was old and out of health, and he appeared to regard these issues as of secondary importance. Neither Lord Granville nor Lord Derby stood out against him with any insistence, and they were reluctantly compelled to acquiesce in a series of compromises and concessions, which invariably encouraged fresh demands. The self-complacent confessions of Moritz Busch reveal how at this period he was employed to write a number of attacks on Great Britain in the *Grenzboten*, of which Ireland, Afghanistan, India, the Boers and South Africa formed the subject matter. An administration which had proved easy to squeeze would no doubt be seriously concerned to find the German press not less hostile than the French.

Of all the methods of Bismarckian diplomacy employed at this time none was more discreditable than the deliberate deception practised not only on the British but also on the German public by the White Book on Colonial questions which was issued in the beginning of 1885. It opened with a despatch, dated the 5th of May, 1884, addressed to Count Münster, the German Ambassador in London, with instructions to communicate its contents to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The despatch, while preferring certain inquiries, contained an exposition of Germany's aims and expressed the desire to make them consistent with British interests and generally to work in harmony with us. The friction which ensued as exhibited in subsequent documents was adroitly made to appear as the result of the difficulty experienced in eliciting any reply and the ignoring by the British Government of the friendly overture thus made. Now this despatch was never communicated to the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who learned of its existence for the first time from the publication of the text

in the White Book. It was indeed actually sent to Count Münster, as he subsequently admitted, but he received simultaneously telegraphic instructions not to act upon it. The despatch was nevertheless used as the text on which the sermon preached by the White Book was based. It was with consternation that we realized at the Embassy the device to which the Chancellor had had recourse and received the wholly unacceptable explanation that its publication must have been due to a slip of memory. At home Lord Granville wrote a letter to Lord E. Fitzmaurice, the Under-Secretary of State, to be read in reply to a question in Parliament put by Mr. Labouchere, which made it clear that he had never received and had no knowledge of Prince Bismarck's despatch of May 5th, 1884. He could not, however, mention what he already then knew, that Count Münster had been deliberately instructed not to communicate it. The Ambassador's confidence could not be betrayed; he would at once have been sacrificed, as indeed he was in any case six months later in July, and transferred to Paris. Mr. Gladstone was determined to avoid a crisis with Germany at all costs, and so we pocketed the affront. Nor was it possible under these circumstances to offer a word in explanation or defence of our policy at Berlin, where we felt profoundly humiliated. For many years I was bound by the rules of official secrecy to maintain absolute silence regarding this significant episode. But eventually the story was published in the *Life of Lord Granville*, by Lord E. Fitzmaurice, and so became public property long after the interest of actuality had gone by.

To this episode and the experience thereby gained that Great Britain could swallow such an unqualifiable proceeding without expostulation, may be perhaps traced back the long series of discourteous and ungracious acts which the German Government permitted themselves towards Great Britain. Experience had shown that we could be confronted with a *fait accompli* which, if no vital interest was involved, would be accepted without a protest. I do not suggest



that such was Bismarck's own intention. The Chancellor had never abandoned the hope of a British alliance, and after several tentative soundings he in 1887 actually approached Lord Salisbury privately but directly with such a proposition. But Bismarck was so convinced of the impossibility of any understanding between Great Britain and either France or Russia, that he felt an eventual understanding with us would not be compromised by such ungracious proceedings to suit his more immediate ends. Lesser men who had taken note of the tolerance or indifference we had displayed, and of our spirit of accommodation to German demands, repeated similar manœuvres. To make this policy more efficacious they encouraged an anti-British atmosphere in Germany. The Press responded with exaggeration and at last the flood grew beyond their control. A long period went by before the slow-working British mind, by nature unsuspecting and unobservant of continental developments, was aroused by the many provocations received. The goodwill of the British which existed in my younger days was uselessly and wantonly alienated by Germany, which was hypnotized into regarding an England which had not consciously done her any evil turn as the real enemy of the Fatherland.

The vigilance which Great Britain had or should have exercised over the ultimate destiny of these unoccupied regions was, in the majority of cases to which I have referred, not directed against Germany, and, in view of the British attitude at that period towards expansion in Africa, there appears no reason to assume that the German Government might not have arrived at a friendly understanding with us for the realization of such projects without creating permanent mistrust of Teutonic methods and professions. The hostility of German policy towards Great Britain only became apparent to the general public a great many years afterwards by the transmission of the Emperor's telegram to President Krüger. But the conduct of the German Government in a long series of colonial issues was from this

time forward constantly and at times even contemptuously aggressive towards us. It is possible that an atmosphere of prepotency and the overbearing manner of German officials which had grown up under the Bismarckian system had so far established a habit that those in power were incapable of appreciating how insupportable this attitude became in international relations. Had not the real history of many of these incidents been concealed from the public in Great Britain for reasons of policy, opinion would long have reached the point where patience boils over, the more so as each successive settlement appeared to be only the prelude to a new issue.

Bismarck himself had no doubt a definite object in view and, realizing that our essential difficulties were at this time rather with France, aimed at bullying Great Britain into friendship and support of Germany. He had himself perhaps perceived that his policy had been a mistaken one at the time when he withdrew from public life. But it is difficult to break away from a political tradition once established, and his less capable successors seem to have accepted it as a legacy. The adoption as a definite policy of the brow-beating of Great Britain and the repudiation of her efforts to re-establish more cordial relations led to a new orientation and ended as it could only end in permanent alienation, of which Germany witnessed the first results at Algeciras and experienced the sinister consequences in 1914.

This examination of the "present discontents" in 1884-5 has carried me beyond the date of the Assembly of the first African Conference. In 1876 the International African Association had been formed under the ægis of King Leopold at Brussels to develop the Congo territories. The claim raised to the river by Portugal had been considered valid by Great Britain. Germany, however, declined to recognize the Anglo-Portuguese treaty of February 26th, 1884, relative to the Congo. The great scheme of the King of the Belgians for the administration and development of the river basin offered an alternative policy. A considerable



measure of public support had already been accorded to a project which was heralded as having a philanthropic character, and Great Britain was at that time ready to co-operate in such a solution and thus to prevent that river from becoming entirely French, which experience had shown to mean the exclusion of British commerce. She was at the same time anxious to secure a certain measure of international control over the vast area embraced by its watershed. The future destiny of the Congo basin was ostensibly the main plea for the German proposal to hold a conference at Berlin on African questions. But all outstanding issues both on the Eastern and the Western side and the principles of partition of undeveloped regions were to be included in its scope.

The conference, at which our delegates had no clerical staff to assist them—there were of course no typewriters in those days—added enormously to the work of the Embassy, and I have seldom experienced a more strenuous period than the three months during which it sat. The discussions and their result are fully recorded in the protocols and the General Act, which defined the International Basin of the Congo and the *régime* to be observed therein. I do not therefore propose to comment here upon an instrument which was subsequently amplified by the Conference and General Act of Brussels. It may, however, be pertinent to mention that no sooner had the conference opened in Berlin than Dr. Peters, Count Pfeil and Dr. Jühlke slipped across from Zanzibar to the African mainland, disguised as mechanics, with a large consignment of German flags for distribution, and began to obtain the signatures or seals of a number of petty chiefs to blank treaty forms which they had brought with them.

The first meeting took place on November 15th. We were represented by the Ambassador, assisted by Sir Percy Anderson for the Foreign Office, Sir Robert Meade for the Colonial Office, Sir Joseph Archer Crowe as commercial expert and Sir Travers Twiss as our leading authority on

international law. H. M. Stanley, the traveller, attended on behalf of the King of the Belgians.

On the morning of the 15th Malet had an interview with the Chancellor, who made certain significant observations intended to prepare the ground and bid for our support. He said that any undue pressure exercised on France by Germany might result in war again, and he was therefore resolved not to use any. French susceptibilities regarding Egypt were great. He admitted, however, that he had only shown his teeth in Egypt because we had, as he alleged, behaved badly in Colonial questions. He had always felt certain in old times that if England did not stand with Germany she would at any rate not help France in the event of war. But since Gladstone's Midlothian attack on Austria and Germany, before he won the elections and was returned to office, he no longer felt so sure. Germany could beat France again as she had done before if the latter was alone without allies. But if France secured allies the position would be serious. Should Great Britain join with France, only France would suffer. Germany could not touch us. We should sweep the seas and France would be punished for all our misdeeds. "However," he added, "we really mean to be friends." The anxiety of Bismarck to secure the isolation of France made the maintenance of cordial relations with Russia the unalterable basis of his foreign policy, and in those days the intimacy of the German and Russian Emperors was emphasized by the exchange of special military representatives, directly accredited to the person of the sovereigns.

Sir Joseph Crowe was not only the commercial attaché for Northern Europe, but in my eyes he had the still greater merit of being, in collaboration with his friend Cavalcaselle, the eminent historian of Art. He told me that his early ambition was to be a painter, but as his brother (Eyre Crowe) had already adopted that profession, his father suggested that he should rather devote himself to the literature of painting. He had already so far trained himself as to be



familiar with technical methods, and in preparing himself for his task he made upwards of 10,000 drawings and tracings from pictures and sketches of the old masters, including all those of Raphael still extant. The first serious work which he undertook was a life of van Eyck. His studies led him to travel in the Low Countries and he went on to Germany in 1847. In the diligence which was conveying him from Hanover to Berlin, whose Museum possessed half the panels of the Adoration of the Lamb, he conversed with and took a fancy to a young Italian, whose name was Cavalcaselle. The day after their arrival in Berlin they met in the gallery and finding that they had both come with the same object in view they spent many pleasant days together, and then each went his own way. In 1849 Crowe was crossing the Place de la Victoire at Paris in the dusk, when a young man, practically in rags and looking the picture of misery, saluted him. It was Cavalcaselle. He had fought with Garibaldi in the defence of Rome and had been sent to France as a prisoner. His patrimony had been confiscated and he was penniless. Crowe took charge of him and helped him to get to England, where he worked as an artist. Eventually his property was restored to him and he went home. Thus began an acquaintance which led to their famous historico-critical collaboration.

Their identity of judgment in attributions of authorship was, Crowe told me, remarkable and even surprising to themselves, in illustration of which he related to me one of their apparent divergencies of view which proved after all to be only a confirmation of the similarity of their deductions or intuitions. There are many galleries which claim to have Raphael's Madonna di Loreto, but the pictures so catalogued are all copies and most of them indifferent. They had for years been hunting in vain for the original. On his way to see Cavalcaselle with a view to the preparation of a new edition Crowe had stopped at Bologna, and in a small private collection he found what he had so long been in search of. The picture was, however, so dilapidated and repainted

that it would have been unidentifiable had he not detected in a few square inches of the surface the brush-marks peculiar to Raphael of which he had made a special study. Full of excitement he rushed to see Cavalcaselle and announced the discovery which he had made at Bologna. His colleague replied that he feared Crowe must be mistaken, for he too had not long before detected the hand of Raphael in a similar picture at Verona. Each adhered firmly to his own opinion and Cavalcaselle engaged him on his homeward journey to stop at Verona, providing him with a letter to the owner. Armed with this introduction he duly presented himself and asked to see the picture. "I regret," said the collector, "to be unable to show it you, for since Signor Cavalcaselle saw it, it has been sold and is now in the house of Signor —— at Bologna." They had both seen the same picture in two different places and had formed identical conclusions. I asked why this discovery had never been proclaimed. He said that only a minute portion remained of the original painting; no one would have credited the attribution to Raphael of a picture presenting so deplorable an appearance, and it would only have damaged their reputation as critics to announce it. They had not, he told me, in their monumental work aimed at being interesting, but had endeavoured to establish a solid basis on which future historians of art might work. These and many other interesting conversations with the father of my old friend, Sir Eyre Crowe, relieved the monotony of ciphering and deciphering interminable telegrams on the subject of the prohibition of the arms and alcohol traffic in Africa, and they remain a pleasant memory of those days of high pressure. Sir Joseph Crowe had such a high standard of the obligations of a critic of art, the disinterestedness of whose judgments must remain above suspicion, that, in spite of innumerable opportunities, he never bought a picture. Much less could he have conceived the idea of selling one.

Percy Anderson, for many years head of the African Department in the Foreign Office, had a peculiar humour of



his own and was very popular with the staff of the Embassy. His stories of bygone days in Downing Street, some of which I had already heard from Lord Ampthill, made us feel how much more serious our generation had already become, genial in camaraderie as it was compared with its present day successors. In those days all clerical work was done by attachés and junior secretaries, and the latest joined were consigned to a department known as the Nursery, to learn their business under the jovial leadership of the famous amateur harlequin John Bidwell. The latter was reported one day in old Bond Street, arrayed in frock-coat and tall hat, to have taken a flying header through a four-wheel cab with open windows containing two elderly ladies, alighting on his hands in the middle of the road to land with a somersault on to the opposite pavement. It was when Lord Palmerston was Secretary of State and Albert Smith's ascent of Mont Blanc was engrossing public attention that Bidwell one day proposed an alpine expedition in the Nursery. The archive presses were accordingly piled in the middle of the largest room. The members of the department were securely roped together with red tape, and using rulers for alpenstocks with Bidwell as guide they proceeded to mount from chair to table, from table to register desk, and thence to negotiate the loftiest summits of the presses. Their leader was engaged in giving a graphic description of the surrounding peaks when he suddenly disappeared down a crevasse between two of the presses. At that moment the door was opened, and the Under-Secretary appeared to ask for a paper. The result was a report to the Secretary of State. But it was through Lady Palmerston that the reprimand was conveyed. And yet never did the Foreign Office command more respect on the Continent than in those days, and never was a Minister more prepotent.

Travers Twiss was by far the senior of the party in years, not far short at that time of seventy. He had been a good deal in Germany and intimate in his youth with the Metternichs of Johannisberg. An incident which he related to

us reminded me of the Saturnalia of the Rhineland nobles of *Grand Crû* in *Vivian Grey*. He was staying at Johannisberg during a great family festival when the chiefs of the house were assembled, and the cellars, where the noblest vintages of that golden nectar reserved for the family were stored, had been ransacked for the banquet. "We began," he said, "with the wine of 1717 and drank through the century." This must have taken place between 1830 and 1840 as he was quite a young man at the time. At the end of a long evening his head remained perfectly clear, but his legs were no longer under complete control. His legal habit of mind led him always to demand precise definitions, and the eternal "what is" of Sir Travers provoked the humour of the juniors. The whole party dined on most evenings with the Ambassador. One night the arrival of the cigarettes brought up the question of when lucifer matches were invented, which was referred to him as the oldest inhabitant. The inevitable "Ah, *what is* a lucifer match?" opened up a long discussion. After it had continued sufficiently long Sir Edward proposed that the party should resume the discussion at dinner the following night, and added: "Sir Travers, will you join us again to-morrow?" When the veteran jurist replied: "Well, *what is* to-morrow?" it was too much for our gravity. *Solvuntur risu tabulae*.

Stanley was somewhat of an enigma to us all. He had come to represent the interests of the King of the Belgians. His stories of experiences in Central Africa were told in simple incisive language and had a very dramatic quality. He spoke with real affection of the natives and of what he believed might be made of them. I liked his relation of the single combats, with their Homeric quality of preliminary speech and denunciation. As he said, "it takes all day there to kill a man." The warriors would look round the corners of their enormous shields and harangue one another; "A precious villain you are; if you want my opinion it is that you are quite unnecessary to the world, and best removed from it." And so on. Not unfrequently, he said,



he had been invited to arbitrate. It was not difficult to make peace, but you had to demand a big fee and represent it as a serious matter to compose such a grave issue. When the award was given war would be buried with much ceremony. I liked Stanley at Berlin, but years afterwards in East Africa I found his name was not one to conjure with among the British. His journeys were regarded as having been conceived rather in a journalistic spirit of self-advertisement, and his travelling companions hardly ever remained his friends. The pioneer life of those days in Africa, perpetual discomfort, privation and often physical suffering made men lose their "sense of proportion," and the absence of any restraining authority swelled their sense of self-importance. After reading Stanley on Tippoo Tib, it was interesting afterwards to hear Tippoo Tib on Stanley. Whatever Livingstone may have felt when he was eventually "found," the general impression in East Africa was that Emin, whose rescue by Stanley the conscience of the Anglo-Saxon race had been induced to demand, did not particularly appreciate being saved and restored to a civilization of which he had lost the habit.

After a few days' interval at Christmas time, during which our delegates returned home, the Conference was resumed on the 5th of January. The German claims had been discussed, and Mr. Gladstone would not entertain the idea of absorbing the coast-line between our South African settlements and the Portuguese frontier. He held that the Germans would make fair colonists and acceptable neighbours. But, if we had no intention of resisting, we might at least have made our concessions graciously. As it was we did neither, and only caused irritation, with the result that the German White Book above referred to appeared and we submitted to an affront which was passed over without a protest. The German people were themselves misled by its contents and relations became anything but friendly. Count Herbert Bismarck was then sent on a special mission to London with the object no doubt of removing irritation. It was matter

for speculation how far the anti-British campaign had been worked up in order to divert criticism from an extremely unpopular measure introduced at this time which trebled the existing duty on corn. The African Conference concluded its, on the whole, satisfactory labours with the signature of the General Act. The International African Association became an independent State, the "Congo Free State"; trade in the conventional basin being declared free, while the navigation of the river was placed under international control. Somewhat similar provisions were laid down for the Niger under French and British protection, and it was established that occupations on the coast must be effective in order to be valid. Bismarck had said he could not admit that the fact that Vasco di Gama had once landed at a particular spot in Africa constituted an indefeasible claim to possession.

On the 26th of February I left for Paris and London with the Ambassador, who was about to be married to Lady Ermytrude Russell. The Chancellor, who had not succeeded in obtaining all that German chauvinists desired by the African Conference, was in very low spirits and, at a farewell interview with Malet, said that the future outlook for Germany profoundly depressed him. He would retire when his Emperor passed away, being himself too old to serve a new master. What he would prefer would be that some anarchist would shoot him when the Emperor died. He no doubt foresaw the difficulties which the succession would eventually entail. He would have done much to win the goodwill of the Crown Princess. But she was irreconcilable and in spite of her great ability and almost more than ability, could not conquer certain prejudices or realize when to give way.

I was enchanted to escape even for a short time from the Court Balls, which recurred at regular intervals between the New Year and Lent, and from all this ceremonial of the Berlin season. As in the summer the staff of our Embassy were continually summoned to Wildpark for tennis, so in



the winter when the ponds in the Thiergarten froze we were invited to skate with the Crown Princess and her daughters. Etiquette still prescribed that in the presence of the Court we should wear the conventional silk hat and frock-coat. This costume was hardly an appropriate one in which to play hockey, and the hats at least were left on a seat and replaced with fur caps. I looked forward with some dread to these afternoons, as the Crown Princess was not a very strong skater and on the ice my services were generally enlisted to lend a supporting hand. Fortunately for me no disaster had occurred before a thaw set in, and then we left for England.

As a pageant a ball in the White Hall at the palace was well worth seeing for the first time. But when the novelty was over attendance, from which there was no escape, became an unwelcome *corvée*. It entailed standing up for four hours in a hot uniform, which on those occasions we wore with white trousers, instead of full-dress knee-breeches, which were apparently regarded in Berlin as revealing too much of the human form, or as reminiscent of livery. All the officers of the General Staff, a very numerous body, and all those attached to the Army Corps of Guards, distributed between Berlin, Potsdam and Spandau, were commanded to be present. They did not, unless of field rank, enter the ball-room until after the conclusion of the royal *cercle*, but filled the ante-rooms and the long gallery through which we passed. The Ambassadors were expected to arrive in the old-fashioned state-coaches, which rocked like a Channel steamer and entailed the maintenance or the hiring of very big horses. The blaze of colour was dazzling, almost the only black coats in the vast throng being those of the American Embassy. By half-past eight we had to be in our places in a great ring, in which the very numerous diplomatic body was arranged according to the priority of appointment of the respective heads of missions. A signal was given to the Lifeguards' band in the gallery, and then the royal procession filed in, headed by the magnificent Perponcher, supported by the

household officials and a number of pages in red. Then came the Emperor, the Crown Prince and Princess, and all the Junior Princes and Princesses at the time in the capital. The Emperor, followed by the Crown Prince and Crown Princess, passed round the ring, addressed a few words to each foreign representative and received presentations. The Empress Augusta was too infirm to take part in this ceremony. When the tour was completed the hundreds of junior officers, who during the previous weeks had spent their leisure competing for the privilege of engaging the proportionately few young ladies available as partners, crowded into the White Hall. Thereupon the Vortanzer, a captain appointed with true German method on account of his proved competence to lead the dancing, gave the signal to the band for the opening royal quadrille. Reversing was strictly tabooed. In those days the leader was Rittmeister von Reischach, resplendent in the scarlet-coated gala uniform of the Gardes du Corps. He afterwards entered the household of the Crown Prince and eventually became Master of the Horse to the ex-emperor William. The great war has severed old friendships and inspired antagonisms and prejudices from which we of the older generation can hardly dissociate ourselves. But I should like here to testify to my sincere regard for that very gallant Suabian gentleman, who was not only a constant and loyal friend to our countrymen, but who on one occasion in a moment of some difficulty took up the gauntlet on behalf of a British acquaintance with a chivalry which I have always honoured and admired. It is one of the many tragedies of war that a whole nation is judged by its opponents in the terms of its least worthy members, and collectively associated with actions which the better elements of that nation sincerely deplore. A cruel and inexorable strain in the Prussian character to some extent infected the whole of Germany after the phenomenal successes of the Bismarckian era, and the plea that the necessity of the State could justify the repudiation of honourable engagements and the violation of established



international or humanitarian precedents had distorted the mentality and judgment of the nation. But Prussia is not Germany, and I rather choose to believe after an experience of many years that the old friends of those days, who included Suabians and Silesians, were individually the good fellows they appeared to be.

By this time I had derived certain definite first impressions from life in Berlin which it is interesting to recall in the light of later events. We were witnesses of a period of transition. The great extension of industrialism was transferring a large number of the agricultural population to manufacturing centres and there was a rapid growth of socialistic spirit in the towns. But the natural docility of the masses, respectful to and dependent on constituted authority, made the movement slow to produce its full effect. Military and aristocratic tradition held the ground firmly, and all the machinery of state was dominated by the classes. The executive was still independent and the government in essentials autocratic. But already longer heads perceived symptoms of a coming change and the steady lengthening of a shadow which a mentality trained in certain conventions had convinced itself could only be lifted by a successful war. Looking back now after some five-and-thirty years I realize that the anticipations made in my diaries forecasting future troubles in store for the German Empire were not over-stated. Had the Emperor Frederick, with his broad and liberal outlook on life, reigned for the number of years on which he might reasonably have counted, much might have been different. The omnipotent influence of the Bismarckian bureaucracy and the military caste would have been weakened, and time would have worked for the elements which make for peace. But events as they turned out only contributed to accentuate contrasts, and those in power did not fail to perceive the growing precariousness of their tenure. The elections of 1912 with their Socialist gains were, for those who realized the internal conditions in Germany, ominous of what might befall in the next few years, and it

was inevitable that the military authorities who still controlled the situation should with their mentality have felt that the time had come to precipitate the war which if successful would, they believed, have given autocracy an extension of life.

It would not, however, have been easy in 1885 to accept the dictum of Gervinus, who died some fourteen years earlier, that Bismarck was only an episode.



## CHAPTER III

### BERLIN, 1885-1886

We stayed the night at Paris with Lord Lyons, whose acquaintance I then made for the first time, and went on the next morning to London.

The Ambassadorial wedding in the Abbey was a very magnificent function and assembled more than the usual crowd of spectators. Having assisted my chief to the best of my ability through the last phase of an unusually long bachelorhood, I then had a few days of liberty.

Cecil Spring-Rice, who was still at the Foreign Office, took me down to Haslemere to spend a night with Tennyson. The dear old man, whose innocent vanity betrayed itself in his picturesque black cloak and big slouch hat, was kindness itself. One could see how he loved his beautiful garden. He was full of questions about Germany and Bismarck, and vehement in his political denunciations, especially at that moment of the attitude of Russia, which country seemed like a red rag to him. We spoke of the work of a young writer, May Probyn, who to the great regret of her admirers, abandoned poetry for the convent. I had made a pilgrimage to Devizes to see her some time before. Tennyson agreed that there was a great deal of promise in her writing, and he had always wished to know her. It was a pity that the "priests had taken possession of her." He discoursed upon the values of "words," speaking of them as an artist might do of colours, of their juxtaposition and their connotation, conveying the impression that he trusted rather to a masterly use of language for effect than to feeling or sentiment. After dinner we withdrew from the dining-room

to a smaller room for dessert, as it is still the custom at College to retire to the Common Room. There he mixed his whisky and lamented the actual evil case of England as it presented itself to him. He would not admit that he was a pessimist. His fears were only for the moment. He demanded an iron hand for order, and would let freedom come with time. Then he left us for a while and coming back read us the Ode on the Duke of Wellington, which at times he seemed almost to be chanting in his deep sonorous voice. We talked and smoked till midnight. Hallam Tennyson and Mrs. Hallam, the best of company, lived with them at Haslemere, for at that time the second son devoted himself almost entirely to the good cause of serving his father and his mother, the most beautiful old lady I ever saw, but frail as a wraith, in whom the body seemed almost to have worn away and to have left only the gracious presence of a soul. Laura Tennant had written to me of her: "To be with her is like being in Church.—If I had a little child, I should take it to be blessed by her." After breakfast the next morning I walked with the poet for about an hour and he spoke much of the little Madonna, as he called Laura Tennant, and her approaching marriage to Alfred Lyttelton. He too had fallen under the spell when he had travelled with her and Mr. Gladstone on the "Pembroke Castle." Of this experience she had written to me; "Tennyson and I were great friends. He always calls me his little witch. He used to read to me every day.—I cannot imagine being frightened of Tennyson, although a good many of them were—he is so childlike and so much too big to be afraid of. I wish you could have seen the moonlight. It never was so fair before; such a golden path across the sea, like a street for angels to tread on, a path that led to the city of God." Of Gladstone he also spoke, referring to him as a good friend and an honest nature, but "Ah!" he said, "he is no statesman, and he will be the ruin of England."

After this interlude, one of the pleasant episodes in life of many which I owed to my dear friend Cecil Spring-Rice.



a great Englishman to whom and to whose work in the war due justice has not yet been done, I returned to Berlin, and not long afterwards the new Ambassador arrived with the Chief. Marriage made but little difference in the pleasant social life which their kindness and consideration maintained for the staff on much the old lines, and a happier family than that over which they presided would be hard to find. Charles Hardinge and Reggie Lister and Fairfax Cartwright were among the colleagues of those days who subsequently made their mark in the profession. In May Lord Rosebery paid a brief visit to the Embassy, which greatly exercised the journalists. Blowitz, the Paris correspondent of *The Times*, with considerable ingenuity, and what in anyone else might have been characterized as consummate impudence, produced a full report of what had passed between him and the Chancellor when closeted alone. It was a mischievous article too, for *The Times* was then, as it long continued to be, regarded on the Continent as officially inspired, and the Chancellor's views as there described by Mr. Blowitz were calculated to arouse a good deal of protest.

Early in June, 1885, the Government at home were defeated on a financial issue and Mr. Gladstone was believed to have manoeuvred for this opportunity of resigning. The Queen sent for Lord Salisbury. They were delighted in Berlin, where they hoped to get on better with the Tories, and a change in the attitude of the German Government became at once perceptible. It was, however, only a short-lived interlude, for Gladstone came back in January of the following year, to remain in office for an equally brief period of six months, terminated by the rejection of his Home Rule proposals. Spring-Rice sent me an amusing story à propos of the change of Government which I suspect him of having invented. Baron Henry de Worms and Sir Henry Drummond Wolff met on the doorstep of Lord Salisbury's house in Arlington Street. "Hullo, Wolff," said Worms, "what are you doing here,—looking for a new suit of sheep's

clothing ? ” “Hullo, Worms,” said Wolff, “looking for a carcass ? ”

Soon after my return Prince Frederick Carl, who gained the name of the Red Prince during the war of '70, died, and a day later General Manteuffel. Herbert Bismarck now rejoined the Foreign Office and not long afterwards he succeeded Hatzfeldt when the latter was sent to London and Münster was transferred to Paris. After the departure of Hatzfeldt there were no more tennis afternoons in the gardens of the Foreign Office. On the other hand, Count Herbert, who was most friendly to me, in spite of my very junior rank, often invited me to little bachelor dinners, where we sampled some of the wonderful old wines sent to his father by his admirers among the proprietors of historic vineyards on the Rhine, in which the old man was no longer allowed by Schweniger to indulge. Another frequent guest, who appreciated the priceless Rauenthaler, was Count Paul Schouvaloff, the Russian Ambassador, brother of the Count Peter, who was so well known in London. I once saw the two brothers at the Friedrichstrasse Station in Berlin, both in military uniform, embrace each other so heartily that the peaks of their kepis collided and both the caps fell off and rolled under the train. Count Paul, of whom we were all very fond, embarrassed me gravely on one occasion after dinner at his own Embassy by putting his hand on my shoulder and saying in English, a language which I had never heard him use before, to Herbert Bismarck : “You are nozing and we are nozing. Zis is the only people ! I have one upstairs, she is with us ten years. Will you not marry her and make her children ? I can no more ! ” Obviously an attaché in those days had need of some discretion.

One night Count Herbert took me and some of my colleagues to the Borussia Kneipe, the post-university Club of old Bonn students, where there was a great drinking of that wonderful Munich beer, the nectar of Walhalla. The Secretary of State, whom a mutual friend described as a



*Kneipe-genie*, because his head was always clear and he could sit down to grapple with a difficult bit of work after an evening which would have disqualified most of us, genially undertook to respond to healths which might be proposed to any of our party after our more limited beer capacity was exhausted. A young lancer of my acquaintance challenged a friend to a contest in rapidity of consumption, and I was invited to give the word of command in the conventional rigmarole. The mugs were placed on the table in front of the rivals, and at the given signal each took his own and literally poured the contents down his throat, the winner being the drinker who could first say *prosit* after emptying his mug. My friend was beaten, and at once challenged his rival to a double test. The process was repeated with two mugs apiece, but he was beaten again. Whereupon he proposed a quadruple contest, and this time four mugs were placed in front of each and tossed off with the same astounding rapidity. The result was, however, unchanged, and my lancer then said he would accept defeat for the moment. I asked him if he had many *schoppes* before we came, —we had arrived rather late after a dinner party. “Not many,” he replied, “about seventeen.” The astonishing thing about these young officers was that they would be duly on parade the next morning at six at Potsdam. They were a hardy race. During the dancing season in Berlin they seemed never to have an opportunity of sleeping at night, and yet they appeared perfectly fit and healthy.

I read a great deal of German at this period, and attended the Deutsches Theater regularly, where the performances were maintained at a very high level of excellence by Kaintz, Friedman, Förster, Engels, Teresina Gessner and Agnes Sorma, and it was possible to study the classic drama, including Shakespeare and Calderon. There was an interesting revival of an early production of Schiller, *Caballe und Liebe*, admirably rendered, containing dramatic material enough for three tragedies, and to my mind nearer human nature than his later plays which are more purely works of

art. The Court Theater was also excellent, but more academic. The Royal Opera gave us a Wagner season with Frau Rosa Sucher, the finest exponent of the Wagnerian heroine that I have ever heard. The ballets were a delight when the principal part was played by Del 'Era, whose art as a dancer and a mime I have never seen surpassed. We supped with her occasionally, when she and her sister cooked the macaroni and talked of her native Naples. It had never occurred to me before that the dancer could be as nervous as I have seen her, when about to play a new part. The *Niebelungen Lied*, which I then studied from cover to cover for the first time, struck me as in many ways typical of the people among whom I was living. It is, of course, only a Volkslied, but it is lacking in the humanity which occasionally illuminates other folk poetry. It is all hacking and hewing, and raiment and gold and blood. Though genuinely rhythmic, it is poor in poetic feeling, monotonous and material. Even the recurring epithets which are so suggestive in the early epic are not there distributed with any art. Hagen is not the *polumetis* or the *polumechanos*, but just the "Grim," and no gleam of human interest relieves the black shadow cast by the evil genius of the drama. The poetic achievement of Germany in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century was remarkable and never greater than at the time of the deepest national depression, but the old national epic struck me as wanting in any real poetic quality.

Having completed my two years of probationary attaché-ship I went on leave in August, and on arriving at home found public interest entirely occupied with the Dilke case. "What are people saying about it?" Chamberlain asked Labouchere, who was then editing *Truth*, in the Lobby. "They are all saying they wish it was you instead," Labby replied imperturbably.

Not long after my return to Berlin in October I accompanied my chief to Dessau. He was accredited to some ten smaller German Courts in addition to Berlin, and had to pay at least one formal visit to each in order to present his



official letter of appointment. The Court at Dessau was typical of an old-world life, which has now probably passed away for ever, patriarchal, kindly and picturesque, and a description of our experience there will serve as an illustration of the procedure at a number of similar "residencies."

After a few hours on the road at Wittenberg, spent in visiting Luther's house and a church full of pictures by his friend Cranach the elder, we arrived at Dessau early in the afternoon and were conducted to the schloss, where we at once put on uniform for the presentation. The court dignitaries, the Grand Chamberlain, the Master of the Horse, the Grand Veneur and the military household were assembled in full dress to conduct us in procession to the audience. After a brief interval we dined at 4 p.m. in the Rittersaal, filled with trophies of the family hero, that great cavalry leader, the "old Dessauer." The Duke of Anhalt-Dessau was most easy of address and a charming personality. His manner suggested: "Don't hate me for being the Duke. I have to be. But I do my best to be a human being in spite of all the paraphernalia." The key-note of the Duchess and the family was a kindly simplicity, which extended also to a Schwarzburg-Sondershausen brother-in-law. After dinner, which was served by an army of retainers, we got out of uniform and redressed for the Court theatre where there was a very fair performance of *Tannhäuser*, with a remarkably good orchestra. The theatre is, of course, maintained by the Duke. Then there was supper in the Gyps-Saal decorated very effectively with the old copper plates from which engravings of the family portraits and estates had been struck. After supper we were shown the treasures and duly revered the "old Dessauer's" saddle and pistol. But the object of the greatest interest was the Kröten-ring, the toad-ring with which the fortunes of the house are bound up.

There was once a very good and gracious princess of Anhalt-Dessau, who was kind and gentle to all things living and even to the animals which others persecute. She had saved and tended an ugly toad. Now the toad was really a fairy

in disguise, and because of her sweetness and goodness the fairy resumed her proper form and gave her a ring which would always secure good fortune to her house, on the one condition that it was never taken away or carried across the Elbe. The tradition was duly revered, but once a sceptical Duke put it on his finger and rode across the river. As he reached the further shore a messenger overtook him and announced that his castle was in flames. On another occasion when it was temporarily removed a great fissure divided the main wall of the schloss. Wherefore it was thereafter carefully bestowed in a double safe let into a wall, and only the reigning Duke had the key. It is a ring of pale gold set with uncut diamonds. We were invited to take it in hand and wish the wish, which the ring has power to fulfil. I cannot remember what I wished. Perhaps it was for the opportunity to smoke, which duly followed the restoration of the ring to the safe!

After an early breakfast the following morning we drove off to the summer residence, Schloss Wörlitz, with one of the Versailles gardens which every small reigning prince felt bound to lay out in the eighteenth century. The lines of Anhalt-Zerbst and Anhalt-Köthen became extinct and their territories and domains fell in to the father of the present Duke of Anhalt-Dessau, with the result that he had seventeen palaces or houses to maintain. He had placed all his property on a private footing and so had nothing to fear from revolution. The local Government was carried on by a Diet and a Ministry, and except for the administration of his own estates the Duke enjoyed a sinecure. The palaces were full of interesting portraits, among which I noticed those of the Duke of Alva, Machiavelli, the great Elector, the two beautiful Mancinis, Mazarin's nieces, and the old Dessauer at all ages. There was also a portrait of Shakespeare about which I should have liked to know more, and of course Catherine of Russia, who was an Anhalt of Zerbst.

Of that large-hearted and unquiet empress many tales have been told. There is one which I would rescue from oblivion.



It was her habit on warm spring evenings in Russia to walk with her ladies in the private gardens of the Summer Palace. Her observant eye had noticed on several successive evenings that the youngest and comeliest of these made a point of passing last through a certain little gateway and exchanging signs of confidence with the royal page whose duty it was to stand on guard there. Accordingly one night when they had remained late and it was very dark, she ordered all her ladies to precede her, and herself passed last through the garden gateway. The page awaiting the accustomed opportunity, as he closed the gate and followed, gave the last veiled figure a genial pinch from behind, whereupon the Empress, turning round upon him, exclaimed with a little scream: "*Insolent! Declarez-vous!*" The page, with ready presence of mind, replied, "*Si votre Majesté a le coeur aussi dur que son derrière, je suis perdu.*" He was forgiven and promoted.

After lunch we took our leave and left for Berlin with a pleasant memory of the Duke of Anhalt, the green diluvial meadows of the Elbe and Mulde, and the patriarchal life of the reigning family among a loyal and contented people.

This visit was followed by another to Brunswick. But the procedure of one small court resembled that of another and one description will suffice. Their ceremonial and etiquette was quite as elaborate, if not more so, than that of Berlin, and it could not be disregarded with impunity.

Count Mons, who was afterwards Ambassador in Rome when I was counsellor there, had been Minister resident at Oldenburg. The Grand Duchess once perceived him from an upper window arriving at the Palace in a soft hat and a dust coat, under which he concealed the regulation frock-coat, which was *de rigueur* for an audience. She instructed her chamberlain to tell him that it would be more becoming to present himself at the palace in a silk hat. The chamberlain did not much appreciate tackling Count Mons, who was known to have a mordant tongue. However, there was no escape, and he had to approach the subject of the hat, which

he did deprecatingly, observing, "You know, my dear Count, how particular they are at these little Courts." "Yes," said Mons, "I know, but '*Kleiner Hof Kleiner Hut!*'" (Little hats for little Courts!)

Sir Robert Morier, our Ambassador in Russia, stayed a day or two at the Embassy on his way to St. Petersburg. There was an ancient feud between him and Bismarck, dating especially from 1870 when Morier was at Darmstadt, and due to his intimacy with some of the great man's rivals. He had also fallen out with Count Herbert at Munich. The latter said that Morier had behaved abominably in publicly taking Arnim's part against his father. Morier, on the other hand, said that Count Herbert had behaved abominably in quarrelling with him because he had invited Arnim, who was an old friend, to dinner when the latter was passing through Munich. Malet thought the opportunity should be taken of reconciling them and invited Count Herbert to meet him at dinner. At the last moment, however, Morier was sent for by the Crown Princess, and when he returned after dinner Herbert Bismarck had already left. So the occasion went by and the old feud was recalled in a very unpleasant manner not long afterwards.

I never served under Morier, but I saw him from time to time on his way through Berlin and had several interesting conversations with him which made me respect his lucid and vigorous power of expression. He was a big man intellectually as well as physically, and a formidable antagonist. In Russia he strenuously upheld British interests during the dispute over the Pamirs with a vigour which almost scared the authorities at home. It was reported that the Queen, on whom certain family interests had perhaps been brought to bear, once suggested to Lord Iddesleigh, during the latter's brief tenure of the Foreign Office in 1886-87, that Morier might be transferred to another field of activity, and, failing to elicit a response, had suggested that he would make a strong Governor of a Colony. "But which of your Majesty's Colonies," inquired Lord Iddesleigh, "is your Majesty



prepared to lose ? ” Morier nevertheless succeeded in establishing a remarkable position for himself in St. Petersburg, where he was eventually appreciated and trusted. The consistent hostility towards him of the Bismarcks probably contributed not a little to enhance his popularity as Russo-German cordiality began to wane.

In November Matthew Arnold came to Berlin to stay some weeks and prepare a report on education in Germany. The unmarried secretaries at the Embassy had at that time a little mess for luncheon at Langlet's, an excellent restaurant kept by a Frenchman, at the corner of the Wilhelm Strasse and the Linden, almost next door to the Embassy, and we at once invited the poet to become an honorary member. He lunched with us there nearly every day and we became the greatest friends. We took him to stay at Görlsdorf, the hospitable house of Count Redern, well known in England in the 'seventies. We induced him to accompany us to the plays and the opera, and the great man renewed his youth and entered into all our combinations. Matthew Arnold was fully conscious of his own value and possessed what the Irishman prayed the Lord to give him, “ a good conceit of himself ” in no small measure, but he was a very lovable man, and I at any rate felt greatly flattered by his friendship. The world had not treated him too kindly, or rather he would never give the world a chance of doing so, for he could not condescend to nonconformist and philistine mentality or “ do without contempt.” It has always been a pleasure to me to know, as I heard afterwards from his two delightful daughters, that he had greatly enjoyed his stay in Berlin and talked of it with genuine pleasure. One day a slight misadventure befell. We were under the impression that he had gone away for two or three days on a round of inspection. One of our party had invited two extremely smart and amusing French demi-mondaines, who were passing through Berlin, to the mess, parenthetically a quite irregular proceeding, though the mess had no strict rules or precedents. We had just sat down to table when the door of our *Cabinet*

*particulier* opened and Matthew walked smilingly in. Explanations were useless as well as impossible, and a chair was placed between the two ladies for "le cher poète," and as one of them was well known for her brilliant wit, the meal was hilarious. His French accent was not by any means equal to his knowledge of French literature, but he struggled manfully and I am quite sure he enjoyed himself. As we strolled away together he put a hand on my shoulder and observed in the grand manner: "Most amusing! But really I cannot imagine that Aspasia and Phryne were quite like that." The episode evidently remained in his memory, for a month or so after his departure I received a letter from the Athenæum, announcing his return to Berlin early in 1886, and adding: "I hope those Sirens, both the silent and the noisy one, have long since departed, and that your luncheons are such as the Bishop and I can approve,"

I took him to the Reichstag. The Chancellor spoke, but that day his voice was almost inaudible. There was a battle royal between him and his bitter antagonist Windhorst, the Catholic and Hanoverian. The latter ended his speech with the words: "People would say that the Government of the late King of Prussia had been pleasanter to live under than the actual Government of Prince Bismarck." These words brought the Chancellor to his feet. They were, he said, a deadly insult to himself and to the Emperor, whose humble and loyal servant he tried to be. He referred to his own increasing years and failing health, and deplored that he should come to the Reichstag only to be affronted. It was not long after this that Bucher in the *Grenzboten*, and according to Busch at the Chancellor's suggestion, compared Windhorst and Gladstone in an article entitled "Diminishers of the Realm."

Little more than two years later I learned with deep regret of the sudden death of Matthew Arnold at Liverpool, whither he had gone to meet his daughter, who was arriving from America. He went out full of life and spirits into the bright April day and walked a little, when suddenly the



"cabined ample spirit fluttered and failed for breath," and he fell forward dead. He was only sixty-six. The last time I had seen him we had met in the Strand, and walked some way together. He enlarged in his spacious manner on the delights of London and the pleasure he took in sauntering through the streets and watching the life of the great city. More than thirty years have passed since we foregathered in Berlin, and my admiration for his poetry has grown and grown; so that it is to him and to Browning that I most often turn as the years increase, to the great optimist of life for encouragement, and then back to the delicate music of Arnold, which brings "the eternal note of sadness in."

At the beginning of December there came a rather disquieting telegram regarding Lady Ermytrude Malet's health, followed at once by a very alarming one from the Queen, which I deciphered. I broke to the Ambassador as much of it as seemed necessary, and we left for England that night. Fortunately before the train left better news had arrived. While in London I passed my examination in International Law, which was a preliminary condition to receiving £250 a year instead of £150, which remained the normal scale of pay for a third secretary until the other day. I remember on the way back to Berlin via Paris, witnessing one of the many revelations of my chief's kindness of heart. A young Englishman was travelling with a spaniel which he tried to take with him in the train. No difficulty was made by the railway personnel, but an old gentleman objected, and the dog was being reluctantly dragged off to the guard's van, when Malet intervened—we had a reserved coupé—and offered the dog hospitality. He lay quietly at our feet all the way to Paris. Many pages could easily be filled with stories of his kindness and consideration, and I for one owe him an everlasting debt of gratitude. He taught me the business of my profession, but he did much more than that. He insisted on the human relation in official life, deprecated the superior answer and the bureaucratic manner, and made me see that it was my

duty, if I had the opportunity, to help every one to the best of my ability. He always took an interest in the little black-hooded black-faced chimney sweepers' boys, who figure in Hans Andersen's tales, and who in Berlin always accompanied the sweepers at their work, and he instituted an annual dinner for these apprentices. That also no doubt is one of the little amenities of life which the war will have swept away. He had always retained a boyish quality himself. A story he used to tell of an Eton experience was very characteristic of the two men whom it concerned. On the 4th of June his uncle, Lord Brougham, drove his coach down, and Malet and his elder brother had mounted up behind him. "Boys must be tipped," said Lord Brougham, "here's half a crown for you," and he gave each of them a coin wrapped up in a bit of paper. When they opened the paper the coin proved to be a penny, and Brougham roared with laughter at their discomfiture. However, Alfred Montgomery, who was also on the coach, said: "Well, boys, I am not so rich as Lord Brougham, but I can afford a shilling," and he gave them each another coin, also wrapped up in paper, which turned out to be a sovereign.

There was a curious side to Malet's character. He took an almost naïve pleasure in simple amusements and he was very easily touched to a sense of pity for human things. But he never allowed himself to grow enthusiastic over anything, nor did he seem to me to have a very strong grip on life. In fact I remember his saying one day,—it is true that this was before he was married—that if he could without inconvenience to anyone, just by walking through a door, pass out of the world also, he would as soon do so as not. I do not think he had in him any trace of superstition or of mysticism, and yet in one point he admitted that he had been affected by an influence which does not generally appeal to the sceptical temperament. He had gone many years before, rather out of curiosity, to see the famous French expert in palmistry, Desbarolles, who had no idea of his identity. Malet had just been in charge at Constantinople,



where many interesting things had happened. Desbarolles told him so much about himself and his recent experiences that he was impressed and he asked the palmist whether there were any tendencies of character indicated in his hand to which he ought to give attention. Desbarolles told him that he was diffident of his own judgment, and that so far from this being justified his judgment was sound and he ought always to act upon his first impression or impulse, because it was almost sure to be right. Malet said that he thought a good deal about this advice, and came to the conclusion that it was warranted and that he had been inclined to mistrust himself and revise his decisions. So he put it into practice ever after and had had no occasion to regret doing so.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Emperor's accession to the throne of Prussia fell on the 25th of January, 1886. Lord Wolseley was sent as special envoy to Berlin to carry the Queen's congratulations, to the delight of Colonel Swaine, the military attaché, who had been with him in Egypt and was one of his oldest friends. He stayed at the Embassy. I was not present at the ceremonial *défilé*, when the Emperor embraced Bismarck and Moltke. But the chief told me of an amusing episode which occurred. Bismarck was anxious to see Wolseley, and the Ambassador was on the point of presenting him, when the Turkish Ambassador, who was standing alongside, slipped between them, and the Chancellor, who was evidently rather absent, took him for Wolseley and said, "I see you preserve your oriental appearance!" An interview was, however, arranged later. Bismarck on that occasion apparently spoke with great frankness. He said that Germany could not afford to do otherwise than to keep well with Russia, but that he would always be ready to support us against France. One curious point which he mentioned was that Napoleon III had asked his advice before the Italian campaign of 1859. He had, however, never mentioned the matter until after the ex-Emperor's death. With reference to that campaign Strachey, our

Minister at Dresden, told me an interesting story. Cavour said one day to Sir James Hudson, our representative at Turin: "We can now be quiet and wait patiently; the Emperor is coming." Hudson asked him how he came to be so confident of this. Cavour for answer handed him a paper containing a letter from Orsini, then in prison and under sentence of death for the attempted assassination of Napoleon III. It seems that the Emperor had sent his minister Pietri to visit him in prison. Pietri quite got round Orsini, and induced him to write a letter confirming the good intentions of the Emperor, who was only awaiting an opportune moment. If, however, Italian agitators continued to attempt his life it would make it impossible for him to move. The letter was genuine. Orsini knew that he could not be reprieved, but he was induced to write as he did for the sake of the cause.

During Lord Wolseley's visit we had a big military dinner at the Embassy, to which all the principal generals at that time in Berlin were invited. Moltke unfortunately was prevented by an old engagement from accepting. The arrangement of the table and the relative precedence of all these military mandarins gave me endless trouble. We were, I think, thirty-six in all. Herbert Bismarck arrived a quarter of an hour late and, on being shown his seat next to the Ambassador, studied the plan and saw the name of the German general who was to be his neighbour on the left. "You must change that place," he said. I protested that this would mean moving every one and that we were already late. He said he could not help it; he would not sit next to a man who—and then proceeded with his habitual unre-ticence to give the reason in the crudest terms. In desperation I went to the dining-room and, keeping my head, rapidly made such dispositions as were possible to modify the table without doing too much violence to the order of precedence, to which so much importance was attached in Germany. Of course the general who was to have sat next to the Foreign Secretary was surprised to find his card transferred elsewhere, and I had to take it on myself and



regret that I had indicated the wrong place to him. After dinner Herbert casually observed to me: "After all, it was not necessary to have changed the places. It was not that man to whom I objected, but another who has the same name." Wolseley made an excellent impression in Berlin and was allowed to accept the grand cross of the Red Eagle by an exceptional authorization rare in the days of Queen Victoria.

It was during this and the previous year that the Balkan question first began to bulk large in my official experience, and thereafter remained a permanent and fertile source of preoccupation. The union of Eastern Roumelia and Bulgaria in September, 1885, was a triumph for the anti-Russian party. The war between Servia and Bulgaria ended with the complete discomfiture of the former and Prince Alexander of Battenberg became an heroic figure. There was much rumour of a marriage alliance which the Crown Princess was said ardently to desire, and which Bismarck would not hear of, having always in view the urgent importance of friendly relations with Russia. There was the scandalous plot to kidnap and depose the Prince, who was transforming Bulgaria into a powerful state, strong enough to defy his former Russian protector, followed by his restoration and his subsequent resignation in August, 1886. Then Greece filled the horizon, and the Greek blockade. But I do not propose as a rule to deal with any but personal reminiscences, and as yet the Balkans were only known to me through official correspondence. At the end of January I went for a fortnight to Italy. On my return I found Lord Edward Cecil, of whom I was to see much in after years, rubbing up his German in Berlin before beginning life in the army.

At this time Panoramas were much in vogue. They have now been killed by the Cinematograph. But there was a lot of clever work in them. In Berlin there was a Panorama representing incidents of the war of 1870, in which Bismarck on horseback was portrayed riding up to the carriage of Napoleon III. The Chancellor said he had been obliged to send a letter to the proprietors telling them that they

had altogether wrongly presented the scene of that dramatic interview. What had really happened was that as soon as he saw the Emperor's carriage he dismounted and let his horse go, advancing to meet him on foot. He would never have ridden up in the aggressive manner in which he had been painted. "But," said he, "a sort of rabid patriotism misrepresented the business, and gave me credit for a piece of rudeness of which I am incapable."

George von Bunsen, a man wonderfully clear-headed and wise with much learning, endowed with a remarkable faculty of expressing his thoughts lucidly, used to reveal to me the other side of the Bismarckian medal. He always spoke in terms of great moderation, but one was conscious of a certain bitterness in a man who was practically ostracized from a social world which only admitted one school of politics. Twenty years earlier, he said, he and those who belonged to his group had great hopes for Germany. He had tried to form a party of men who had time and means at their disposal, and who would devote themselves to public service as men of the same social standing did in England. He had found many ready to co-operate. But the Bismarckian ascendancy had crushed any such initiative. Everything which did not proceed from and rest upon the State and upon paternal government was discouraged, and there was no room for such a sphere of activity. One of the sinister effects of the prevailing *régime* was the deterioration of the Civil Service. Twenty years earlier the Prussian Civil Service had been the best in the world, the most public-spirited. Its members devoted all their energies to developing the resources of a poor country, and forgot themselves in their work, in which they took pride. But the men who had left the Universities since the first great Prussian success in 1866 were inspired by quite other ideas. Personal advancement at any cost was now the only aim of their emulation. There was a tendency to ride roughshod over every one, and to treat every questioner as a person who had no right to presume to an opinion. These were unfortun-



ately the men with whom the Crown Prince would have to govern.

On the 24th of April a telegram from George Curzon reached me with these words: "Laura died this morning." Her boy was born on the 17th and she never really rallied. To how many of us did it seem on that sad morning that "Glory and loveliness have passed away" and that the world was infinitely poorer. Since the days when religious fervour canonized certain gracious ephemeral presences, the legend of whose gentle charm abides, it can seldom have happened that so young a life should in three or four years have cast such a spell over old and young, over the quickest and the keenest intelligences, as well as over the humble and obscure. The tragedy of it is vivid to me still after five-and-thirty years. The gods had loved her too well. Perhaps no one better than Mr. Gladstone in his beautiful letter to Alfred Lyttelton summed up what had been, when he wrote that life was to be measured not by time but by intensity, and that in her few years she had probably lived as much and more than other lives which are prolonged to the allotted term. From those who knew and loved her, as from those who had only known of her by report, I never heard one word of criticism, though her life was unconventional and emancipated beyond the spirit of those days. There was a rightness and a grace in every spontaneous act and gesture, and never "anything a man might blame." It seems she had anticipated that the crowning experience of motherhood might be her last, and had written a series of wonderful messages to her friends. To me as one of the first whom she had known intimately there came a very touching message, which Alfred sent me in a letter which tore the heart. "I leave Rennell Rodd my Browning and my Blake. He taught me to love Browning and I am full of gratitude." There followed a touching message commending to my affection the child that was still unborn, which seems to suggest a premonition that she would not survive the ordeal. I feel it is of too intimate a character to quote. Little Christopher,

however, only survived for a brief stage the radiant being who awaited him where "Love not wisdom watches at the Gate."

In addition to my normal work and my duties as private secretary I devoted all my spare time at this period to a voluminous report on the German administrative system, and later to another on the insurance of seamen, the first instalment of a comprehensive scheme of working men's insurance included in Bismarck's state socialistic programme. The obligation of juniors interested in their profession to prepare voluntary reports on matters of public interest in foreign countries seems to have fallen of late years rather into abeyance. It is true that for many years past current work has been so heavy that little time has remained for special studies. But the practice was no doubt valuable. Research and inquiry brought the younger secretaries into contact with officials and representative men, and entailed a certain exploration of the country in which they were posted. A report, moreover, supplying information on the foreign treatment of questions which were engaging public attention at home, if efficiently prepared, ensured a good mark to the writer. I was interested to see how much space in the press was devoted to my reports, which were published as official papers.

It was a standing custom that the whole staff of the Embassy should dine on the Queen's birthday with the Crown Prince and Princess at Wildpark. This year (1886) the old Emperor was present at the dinner. He appeared to have taken a new lease of life and was in excellent health and spirits.

In June of the same year took place the tragic and dramatic death of Ludwig of Bavaria, the mad king. Malet was sent to Munich to represent the Queen at the funeral, and I, as usual, accompanied him. All sorts of stories were current as regards the King's death, and it remained shrouded in uncertainty. He had been for some time placed under restraint and constantly attended by a doctor.



His brother Otto, who had from the first been kept under supervision, was reported once to have observed that he himself had lucid intervals, but that Ludwig was always mad. There was, however, method and something more in his madness. Like Nero he was an artist by temperament, and a great patron of art. Wagner owed everything to his encouragement and support, and his conceptions were magnificent if inconsistent with modern ideas and resources. His hero was Louis XIV. I remember the Crown Prince telling me that he went to see him at the moment when war with France had become inevitable, and found him quite reasonable and sound on the political issue which they had to discuss, but really much more interested in a monument which he had just erected to the memory of the Roi Soleil than in actual and vital issues. His extravagances in expenditure, and apparently also his personal violence, made it inevitable that he should be placed under some restraint, and a regent was appointed in his uncle Leutpold, who eventually, after the death of Otto, became King.

Under the circumstances it seems strange that he should have been confined on the borders of a lake. It will be remembered that he was drowned at no great distance from the shore, and that the body of Gudden, the doctor who was in charge of him, was also found in quite shallow water. The explanation which obtained general acceptance at the time was that he had attempted to escape by swimming across the lake, and it was even rumoured that his cousin the Empress of Austria had a carriage waiting for him at a spot indicated outside the park. But the probabilities pointed rather to suicide. He had already tried to obtain a poison. He was a big and very powerful man, and there seemed to be no doubt that he killed the doctor, who had probably followed him into the shallow water and tried to hold him back. Drummond, our Minister in Munich, who saw the bodies the morning after they were recovered, told me that Gudden had been struck on the

head with a heavy stone. If the stories told in Munich could be credited, there had been other victims of his violence. He had an unbalanced sense of his own greatness and absoluteness. A mania for solitude grew upon him and he resented any intrusion on his privacy. On the other hand, he was friendly and affable to those in humbler life. There were also stories of a more sinister character current. He was undoubtedly a man of many and remarkable gifts, and an instance of how nearly great wit and madness are allied.

The Ambassador walked in the funeral procession, which I witnessed from the house of Sir Henry Howard, the former British Minister, who, after his retirement, had adopted Munich as his home. A very picturesque feature were the groups of the various religious orders in their old-world dress. The Crown Prince Frederick, who followed the bier with the Archduke Rudolph, carried his baton of field-marshal. The ceremony in the church lost much by the absence of any music from organ or instrument, and the intoning of the bishops and canons without accompaniment sounded harsh. A magnificent catafalque had been erected to receive the coffin, and a shield bore the inscription: "Ludwig von Bayern Pfalzgraf am Rhein."

We obtained permission to go to Chiemsee and visit the new and even more sumptuous Versailles which he had been for many years building on an island in the lake. The main feature were all reproduced, the *Galérie des Glaces*, which, if I am not mistaken, was of even larger proportions than the original, the *Oeil de Bœuf* and the bedroom of state. The magnificent staircase was, however, original. He had last been there some nine months before, and no work had been done since. The fountains had only played once. Before our visit, with the exception of the workmen and architects actually engaged in construction, only some half dozen people had been allowed to see the palace, and even the objects which were being made for it were shown to no one. A million had already been spent there and it



would have cost another to complete it. Hardly less fantastically extravagant was the castle of romance which he had constructed at Neuschwanstein. His commanding presence and handsome face, his artistic impulses and his solitary and uncanny life, had long interested the world in this strange figure of a King whose tragic death remains shrouded in mystery. He will live in the legends of the mountain people who were long unwilling to believe that he was really dead.

I spent a month at home in July and August and accompanied George Leveson Gower during the last days of his election campaign round Staffordshire, where he was beaten by some 800 votes after having been elected with a majority of 1,300 only a year before. Mr. Gladstone's decision in favour of Home Rule for Ireland had roused great bitterness in the country. It was an old age conversion. Years afterwards Lord Cromer told me that when he himself thought of entering political life as a Liberal he had consulted Gladstone, who advised him against doing so, on the ground that there was no further special work for the Liberal party to do after the electoral Reform Bills. But Gladstone was bound to find some new outlet for the energy which years had not impaired, and he entered on the new struggle with ardour and even violence. One night at dinner at Sir Charles Tennant's house he almost shouted : " It has fallen to my lot to teach this nation several lessons. They are very slow to learn, but so help me God, I will make them learn this lesson too." I paid a very pleasant visit to Knebworth, to the Lyttons, who had a large party ; Count Hatzfeldt was there, Lady Galloway, Lady Airlie, Rowton, Cranbourne, Reggie Lister and many more. Lytton talked to me long about literature. Not quite consistently with his former remarks on plagiarism he said that he looked always for the *indictum ore alieno*. It mattered not so much how a thing was said, but let there be some thing to say, or say nothing. And this reminds me of one of the keenest sayings of Wilde which was being

quoted about that time. Lewis Morris, who had had a certain success with his *Epic of Hades*, produced another book of poems, which to his great annoyance was left almost unnoticed by the critics and the literary world, apparently just because he had little or nothing to say. He was complaining to Wilde of the neglect his latest work had encountered and said: "There seems to be a conspiracy of silence. What ought I to do?" "Join it," said Wilde.

At the beginning of September I accompanied the Leveson Gowers, father and son, and Shoobridge for a day or two to Munich, whence we went on to Schliersee, where Mr. Gladstone was staying with Countess Arco and Lord Acton. Dr. Döllinger was also there. Though nearing his eightieth year Döllinger still bathed every day in the lake, and ate only one modest meal. He was, however, too deaf to join in any general conversation. S. and I stayed at the inn, but went to the villa for our meals. I noticed in Mr. Gladstone a sympathetic attitude of courtesy when he spoke to Döllinger in English, a thoughtful way of correcting his own sentence into simpler language, if it had been a little obscure. It is one of the failings of our countrymen abroad when speaking their own language, and those who spoke any other with facility were then rare, that whether from want of imagination or thoughtfulness they take no particular pains to simplify their sentences, but even use colloquialisms, which a foreigner can hardly be expected to follow.

Mr. Gladstone talked to us much about John Stuart Mill. He said of him what I should think was very true, that his mind was so intently fixed upon the subject with which he was dealing that he was quite unaffected by the personality of the individual to whom he might be talking. He never lost his temper however fiercely he might be attacked. "I was so fond of him," he said, "that I never noticed his defects, if he had any." It rather amused us to hear him refer to a certain Mr. Grenville as having been the "Grandest old man in London." He surely cannot have



been unconscious that he was himself popularly known as the G.O.M. Reminiscences of Eton occupied us one evening at dinner. Eton was very pagan in his day, he said; the boys went to chapel but took no prayer books with them, except on Sundays. One, Milnes Gaskell, who was seen with a prayer book on a Saturday was taunted with being a Methodist. When, however, determined to do the right thing, he went to chapel on Sunday without one, he was proclaimed an Atheist. The famous Dr. Keate was only five feet high and had to flog himself into respect. Mr. G. chuckled over the well-known story of how by some accident the confirmation list was substituted for the flogging-list, and Keate accordingly flogged all the candidates, observing when he learned his error that they would no doubt deserve it some other day. Lord Acton never took the initiative in conversation, but he had the charm of a great intellect, untroubled by the storm of public life, and vast as his knowledge was he seemed diffident in pronouncing judgments. When two such men meet they react on one another, and it was a privilege to hear them talk.

An unusual number of English visitors came to Berlin that autumn. One of these Sir George Bowen, who admitted that he had reached the stage of anecdotage; nevertheless he showed his sense of the *à propos* by telling Herbert Bismarck a story at dinner at the Embassy which pleased him immensely. Conversing one day with Li Hung Chang, Bowen had discovered that they were both born in the year in which Napoleon died. "Nature," said Sir George, "abhors a vacuum and having removed Napoleon substituted Li Hung Chang." The latter acknowledged the compliment, but observed that it had been his ambition to be not the Napoleon but the Bismarck of his country. Some years later I met Sir G. Bowen again in Athens. He had aged considerably and was as full as ever of stories, but with an aggravated tendency to tell the same one over again. One evening at dinner at the Legation he had just told the table the same story twice—the second time after

a very brief interval. Whereupon George Curzon, who was also dining there, with a perfectly serious face, told him his own story back. Bowen listened without the slightest trace of surprise and said he could guarantee the accuracy of the facts. King George of Greece, in whose honour the dinner was given, could not keep his countenance.

Lord Leighton also came to Berlin for the closing of the Art Exhibition. He was a great favourite of the Crown Princess. A little incident which happened one day when we were both lunching with her reveals what a first-rate linguist he was. We were talking German, and I had made use of a word to convey a certain conception, which amused the Germans because they said that though it was quite a good word to have coined and very expressive, it did not really exist in the language. Leighton, with all deference, submitted that it was not only a possible but a recognized word, and a reference to the authoritative dictionary proved him to be right. He was a man of singular charm, whom I always looked upon as having led an ideally happy life. Not only was he glorious to look upon, whether in the Apollo stage of youth, the Zeus-like phase of middle age, or the shaggier Poseidon presentment of later years, but he was so variously gifted as to be "not one but all the arts' epitome." Of course, my friend Whistler with his bitter tongue could not spare him. A lady one day was enlarging enthusiastically on his many accomplishments. He could make a speech in four languages, he was a great critic, and a remarkable musician. "Paints too, don't he?" said Whistler.

Clinton Dawkins also paid me a visit in November. He had been to Venice and happened to be at the island of Burano when a monument was being unveiled to Galuppi, the composer. The Mayor made the panegyric oration, in the course of which he said that Burano was only a small island in a very wide world, and that its eminent son, Baldassare Galuppi, would hardly perhaps have achieved his universal renown had it not been for the English poet



who had sung his fame and made him known wherever the English language was spoken. Whereupon he dived into the crowd and, amid the cheers of the assembly, drew forward and set in their midst the "illustre Roberto Browning."

It must have been about this time or soon after, when Lord Salisbury had returned to the Foreign Office, that diplomatic secretaries who were next on the list for promotion were made very indignant by the bestowal of the post of Secretary of Embassy, now called Counsellor, at Vienna on the military attaché, whose term of employment was running out. A question asked in Parliament on the subject extracted the superior reply that the military attaché has been appointed because no one else was so well qualified to fill the post. A few weeks later he ran away with a very popular and charming dancer, and we felt that the Service was avenged.

The Chancellor in these days lost no opportunity of dwelling on the necessity of maintaining Austria as a Power in Europe in order to preserve the equilibrium. He had in 1866 insisted on that policy in opposition to the King of Prussia and all the military party. He was no longer so sure of Russia under Alexander III as he had been in the days of his predecessor. Russian military preparations were regarded with grave suspicion, and in spite of his counter-insurance treaty of 1884 with Russia the Chancellor sought to draw the Tories into a Mediterranean understanding with Italy and Austria. The Boulanger movement in France was beginning to cause him apprehension. A new Army Bill was rejected by the Reichstag, which asserted a view of the Constitution differing radically from Bismarck's, and it was accordingly dissolved. Early in 1887 he repeated to Malet that Germany would not attack France, nor would France attack Germany so long as the actual French Ministry remained in office. But Boulanger had involved himself in grave pledges, and had wanted to send 50,000 men to the frontier during the trumpery Schnäbele incident. Germany would not mind if war was forced upon her by a

French attack, and Russia would not move. In February, Prince Hohenlohe, the Governor of Alsace-Lorraine, made a speech to the Provincial Committee which caused a sensation. The statement that Germany might be forced to attack France owing to the menace of a turbulent minority, could evidently not have been made without authority. Pressure had no doubt to be exerted to ensure that the new Reichstag would pass the Army Bill. But the manner of exerting it made Germany, and not France, appear to be the provocative party.

On the 22nd March, 1887, the venerable Emperor completed his ninetieth year, which began auspiciously, as the Government at last obtained a majority in the Reichstag. Nearly all the German Sovereigns assembled in Berlin for the occasion or sent representatives. The Prince of Wales arrived on the 20th. I had been specially retained to conduct a mechanical waxwork show at Count Radolinski's, with a new and original dialogue prepared for the occasion. All the younger elements in Berlin Society took part in it, and as nothing of the kind had ever been done there before, it was an immense success of hilarity. Most of the traditional public characters in Berlin life were represented and duly wound up, but we had to be very careful not to introduce any items in the programme savouring of *lèse majesté* as the audience was largely composed of monarchs and heirs-apparent. Sir Arthur Sullivan, who had come for a performance of the "Golden Legend," conducted the music for a scene from the "Mikado," which had just then taken Berlin by storm. A night or two afterwards I went to a very merry supper at Herbert Bismarck's. He had engaged a music-hall singer to entertain us, whose repertoire was even more than suggestive. Prince William stood just outside the door, as if disapproving, and withdrew early. The rest of the party, some twenty-six in all, remained till after three a.m.

Towards the end of the month Austen Chamberlain paid a visit to Berlin and foregathered with us. Looking back



on that first meeting thirty-five years ago, and seeing him after brief intervals repeatedly through the intervening years until the present day with a splendid record behind him, I realize that of all my friends of youth no one has changed so little since we met in my rooms in Berlin in the year of grace 1887.

In April I renewed the precedent of spending a portion of my leave in Italy, where I joined my family. In Florence I found my old Oxford friend, Rhoda Broughton, whom I also met again in Venice. I had not been there since '66, when the white-coated Austrian band was still playing in the piazza of St. Mark.

The situation with France improved under a Rouvier Government, and Flourens, who had saved the situation during the Schnäbele incident, remained at the Foreign Office. Peace, therefore, seemed assured. The Grand Français, Lesseps, paid a visit to Berlin in the spring. He had grown very old and rather lost his head when talking to the Crown Princess. He launched out into the most violent abuse of Great Britain. "Ceus gueux d'anglais," he said, "nous allons bientôt les chasser de l'Egypte." The Crown Princess listened patiently, and when he had finished his tirade said very quietly : "Très intéressant, Monsieur, tout ce que vous venez de me dire, mais n'oubliez pas que je suis une princesse anglaise" !

During the winter the health of the Crown Prince had given rise to considerable anxiety. He could not shake off a long-standing hoarseness which was at first ascribed to a polypus in the throat, and some months in the South had led to no improvement.

## CHAPTER IV

### BERLIN, 1887-1888

The slowly awakening consciousness of rivalry or incompatibility of temperament between Germany and Great Britain received a much greater stimulus at a critical moment than has been generally appreciated in our historical retrospects from circumstances which arose out of the illness of the Crown Prince, from the rivalry of the various medical authorities, and the part played by, or attributed to, the Crown Princess. Having watched from a post of vantage the whole sequence of events until the tragic close of the Emperor Frederick's unhappy three months' reign, I nevertheless find it extremely difficult to arrive at a fair and unprejudiced opinion as to the rights and wrongs of the controversies which raged at the time, and it would be more congenial to pass them by in silence. But a spirit of justice and obligation to those that are gone impels me to record certain incidents and evidences which came within my experience, and which may be of value in correcting misapprehensions.

In the first place, it can easily be demonstrated that on one point, which formed the subject of constant misrepresentation in Germany, the view which found general acceptance there was unfounded. The summoning of an English doctor, Sir Morell Mackenzie, to report on the case was not unnaturally attributed to the influence of the Crown Princess. This presumption was not correct, however welcome the choice may have been to her.

The Crown Prince had gone to Ems with his family in April, 1887, to receive treatment for the throat. But



no improvement resulted, and in May they returned to Berlin. Late in that month the Crown Princess, who had consented to act as godmother to the child of one of our Secretaries, was to lunch after the ceremony at the Embassy. At the last moment, owing to an aggravation in the symptoms of the Crown Prince, it seemed uncertain whether she could be present. She did, however, come, and was in a very unnerved condition. She then told the Ambassador that the doctors in attendance on the Crown Prince had decided to extirpate the larynx, that there was to be an immediate operation which was not without grave danger. Her reply to a question of Sir Edward's as to the possibility of obtaining a further opinion, expressing ignorance as to the best existing authorities, made it clear that at that moment she had not advocated the summoning of Mackenzie. Almost immediately after this conversation Prince Bismarck came to see the Ambassador and told him that he had just discovered that the doctors in charge were about to perform a very serious operation on the heir-apparent without consulting either the Emperor or his Chancellor,<sup>1</sup> an operation which would even in the most favourable circumstances deprive him permanently of his voice. He spoke with great heat of the presumption of the doctors who had proposed to act without official warrant. He had laid his objections before the Emperor, who had intervened, and, before any final decision was taken, the best specialist advice obtainable was to be called in. There were at the time three eminent authorities on the throat in Europe, but the choice lay between the Austrian and the British. After consideration of their various qualifications the British specialist, whose text-books on the throat were used in German medical schools, had been selected. It was Sir Morell Mackenzie. In view of these communications, of which the Ambassador informed me immediately after they

<sup>1</sup> This is confirmed in Bismarck's memoirs, where he states that the doctors had not even intended to inform the Crown Prince himself of the contemplated operation.

were made, it seems clear that the Crown Princess was in no way responsible for the original summons. But when the serious and fatal character of the disease was finally established, and the treatment of the case by Mackenzie was violently criticized in Germany, she was universally represented as having selected him, nor were those who knew the facts chivalrous enough to correct the misapprehension. How far the influence of the Crown Princess may have been exerted later in retaining Mackenzie in permanent charge of the case I cannot say. But it would have been less than human if she had not strongly desired to have the services of the specialist who, when called in by the highest authority in the State, had declared the critical operation to be unnecessary and had encouraged the hope of ultimate recovery. On the other hand, it was hardly to be anticipated that the overriding of the opinion of the German doctors by that of a foreign expert would meet with unquestioning acquiescence in Germany. Mackenzie removed a small portion of tissue from the part of the throat affected, which was submitted to the scientific analysis of the illustrious physiologist, Virchow, who pronounced the growth not to be of a malignant character. Mackenzie held that it could be removed and that the voice need not be permanently injured. The immediate effect of these announcements was a general feeling of relief. But Professor Bergmann, who had been in charge of the Crown Prince until Mackenzie's arrival, did not alter his opinion. It was afterwards asserted, when the medical controversy reached its bitterest stage, that Mackenzie had taken the section for analysis from the healthy and not from the diseased portion of the throat, and he was accused of having done so deliberately in order to secure a favourable verdict. In any case, for some time after this experiment the accounts of the Crown Prince's health became more reassuring, and he was able to go with his family to England and later to Scotland, and to take a prominent part in the celebration of the Jubilee of Queen Victoria. There all eyes were centred



upon him not less on account of his splendid presence as he rode in the procession than because of the universal sympathy felt for his position at a moment when the vitality of the old Emperor was visibly declining. In the month of June the Emperor had been seriously ill.

A few days after the circumstances referred to I dined with Herbert Bismarck at a little party of eight which he gave in honour of the American Ambassador, Mr. Pendleton. No reference was made to the subject, but the occasion remains memorable to me from the fact that as Mr. Pendleton knew no other language, conversation throughout the evening was carried on exclusively in English, and it impressed me not a little that the six Germans present should speak the language with such absolute facility. Among them was Holstein, who eventually became the *Eminence grise* of the German Foreign Office and who was regarded as one of the ablest men in the public service. In those days very few of the diplomatic body ever came across him personally, for he never went into the world and sought for no distinctions. Holstein claimed that he was just an old bachelor, and wished to be treated as such. But I believe that he had his distractions out of school. He had been used by Bismarck in former times to keep his rival Arnim under observation, and, though he had behaved quite frankly and had warned Arnim as to his instructions, he was no doubt sensible of a certain odium which attached to such an ungrateful mission. On Bismarck's retirement Holstein did not withdraw from public life; he adhered to the new *régime*, and refused an invitation to Count Herbert Bismarck's farewell official dinner. Under Baron Marschall von Bieberstein he became the dominant factor in the Wilhelmstrasse, where he exercised a sinister influence against any rapprochement with Great Britain. That evening he made use of a rather suggestive phrase to me when I was rallying him about his unsociability. He said "*Das Staatsleben hat mich als Mensch verdorben*"—the service of the State has spoiled me as a human being. These

words well described not a few of the old-fashioned civil servants. They were extremely efficient, but inclined, through the life they made for themselves, *vivendi perdere causas*. The State or the profession absorbed men so wholly that there seemed to be no room left for the amenities of intercourse. The official of those days had become a member of a privileged caste, and took his colour from the hierarchy under which he served, behaving to the public rather as a master than as a servant. I remember Bismarck saying one day that the freedom of personal relations in England, especially those between opposing political parties, was a condition which he envied. In Germany it was not possible. The professional and military classes were necessarily antagonistic, and so long as Germany occupied a critical position as the "middle-point" of Europe, surrounded by enemies or doubtful friends, the military element must continue to predominate. This attitude of mind seems to account for much which later experience has revealed.

In July, 1887, I paid a fortnight's visit to England, and found a number of my friends, who were now generally designated as the Souls, engrossed in the study of Ethics, with a young girl-graduate from Newnham lecturing to them. They were discussing the most comprehensive problems of philosophy with pleasant irresponsibility, though some of them seemed very much in earnest. That young generation of beautiful and clever women, the complement to a group of brilliant men, whose unconstrained relations had broken down many of the barriers of mid-Victorian convention, were a remarkable manifestation of the last decades of the nineteenth century, and in a wide experience of many countries I have never met any section of society more interesting or more charming. What remained of the old conventions has now long disappeared and a new social order has replaced it. But what has become of the quick humour and the intellectual brilliancy which characterized the first revolutionary movement? I joined a delightful party at Ashridge, where a certain number of the group



were assembled as guests of the most ideal hosts of that spacious old-world English life, together with others of the old order for contrast, and among them my Oxford friend, Rhoda Broughton. Harry Cust, who was there, seemed to bear her no ill-will on account of a recent volume, the much courted but not impeccable hero of which was regarded by a number of friends as having a not wholly accidental resemblance to himself.

After returning to Berlin I paid a brief visit to the fine old house of the Königsmarks at Plaue on the Havel, where they showed me drawers full of letters from Maurice de Saxe written to his mother, Aurora Königsmark, in French, not very decipherable, which I understood had never been published or even examined from an historical point of view. There was a portrait of Sophia Dorothea's murdered lover, but I did not see any records of the gallant captain of adventure who fought for Venice in Morosini's great campaign against the Turks in Morea. He belonged, it is true, to a Swedish branch of the family. The Ambassador also took Reggie Lister and myself to Dresden to see for the first time a complete performance of the "Ring." Our visit was, however, quite a private one, for we maintained a separate representative at the Court of Saxony, and we only devoted ourselves to sightseeing. I took a particular interest in the series of residential pavilions constructed for the mistresses of the great lover whom Carlyle has labelled as "Augustus the physically strong." A former member of the Legation at Dresden told me a pleasant story of the surprise and amusement of the old King of Saxony at the unceremonious address of an American traveller who had been invited to a ball at Court. He had been duly presented at the *cercle* and, after watching the proceedings for a while, he approached the sovereign and observed: "You ain't dancing much, King. Let me introduce my daughter. She don't know many people here."

In the late autumn my old friend Sir William Richmond

arrived at the Embassy. He was to paint the portraits of the Ambassador and Ambassadors, the former in full dress uniform. We arranged an improvised lay figure to hold the heavy gold embroidered coat and, the trouble which it gave the artist reminded me of what Millais once said about Watts: "A great artist, full of ideas and imagination, but the trouble with him is that he has not painted enough buttons in his life." If this formal portrait was not one of Richmond's successes, he was a great success himself, and Malet, who had an instinctive sympathy with the unconventional and the Bohemian, asked Bismarck to allow Richmond to paint him. The Chancellor not only consented but invited him to stay at Friederichsruhe, a privilege which few enjoyed. He was to go there for three days, but he remained for ten and the family wished to detain him even longer.

Richmond arrived about mid-day in November at the ancient and rather cheerless house in the country of the primeval Saxons, and was beginning to feel marooned in his big room looking over a lake and the endless forest, when he became aware of a tall black figure standing in the doorway and then advancing to meet him, speaking somewhat shyly in English. "Edward Malet," he said, "whom I have known ever since he was a boy, when his father was at Frankfort, has asked me to do this, and there are few things he should ask me which I would not do for him." Then he shook hands. The veteran statesman and the artist at once got on famously. Malet was the link. The Chancellor seemed really devoted to him and gave as one of his reasons: "Edward Malet could not tell a lie, not even a political one." This was, therefore, a quality which he could admire—in others! At lunch he said: "I would like you to show me to the English people as I really am, as a man of heart, whose self-control is all learned and not by nature." One of the first lessons in disguising his feelings he had learned, he said, when he was sent to school at six by his mother, who was a hard, ambitious



woman. He could still remember his home sickness and his longing to return to his father. The schoolmaster found him crying, but he would not tell the real reason, and said he had a pain in his stomach.

The great dog which always accompanied the Chancellor lay beside him on the floor during meals, and the great man would toss anything for which he did not care from his own plate to the *Reichshund*. The first evening Richmond dressed for dinner. Bismarck, who was not dressed, looked at him and said: "You have done us a great honour to have dressed yourself for dinner. I have not in my possession such a thing as a tail-coat. So I will ask you for the rest of the time to excuse yourself the trouble of dressing." There was a charming courtesy and a genial humanity in the old man, where business of State was not concerned. But, as I have found to be the case with the majority of Prussian officials, there were two distinct personalities; and, gracious and kindly as he might reveal himself to be in private relations, the Chancellor in public affairs was ruthless, inexorable and unscrupulous.

He would sit up long after dinner talking and smoking his long-stemmed pipe. He asked innumerable questions about England, where there was much that he did not understand. He had his opinions regarding our politicians. He described Gladstone as having the venom of eloquence. "He cuts down trees," Bismarck said; "I try to plant some." This seems to have been a favourite figure of speech with him, for I remember his using it in conversation with Malet, when the press had spoken of a possible visit of Gladstone to Germany, and Malet asked him if he would not be interested in meeting a statesman whose career had run on contemporary lines to his own. "No," Bismarck replied, "I would rather not meet him. I feel he would talk me round against my will. Our respective attitudes in life are diametrically opposed. He spends his time in cutting down trees, and I in planting them." The observation had its literal as well as its figurative significance.

Besides the portrait head in oils in which he succeeded in presenting the Chancellor in his more benevolent aspect, Richmond did some extremely interesting pencil studies of the veteran in his home life. After ten days he had to return to finish his work in Berlin, where every one was depressed and anxious at the grave reports from San Remo of the Crown Prince's condition. In view of coming struggles there was something suggestive in the words which the Chancellor had used to Richmond: "When I was young I was an arrogant egoist—but there was a fire within me, and it is not quenched yet." The last night at dinner he said: "I hope I shall live to see my ambition of forty years realized, Germany with the strongest army in Europe, quite unassailable; England with the strongest navy, mistress of the seas; the two nations together, and then peace. To that let us drink!" It is possible that these glimpses of the Chancellor's private life have been recorded elsewhere. As I made notes of them directly they were told me they have the interest of actuality.

The political situation that autumn became very interesting. The Italian Prime Minister, Crispi, paid a visit to Berlin. He had succeeded Depretis, who died in the summer after a long leadership from 1876 to 1886, a typical democratic statesman, who possessed nothing but a little four-roomed house in his native place, Stradella, and lodged on the fourth floor up 120 steps in Rome. Depretis had associated his old opponent Crispi in the administration, and the Sicilian became his inevitable successor. With his visit the existence of an alliance between Germany, Austria and Italy became matter of public report. An ephemeral Spanish-Italian Mediterranean understanding appeared to supplement it and there were rumours of a possible further accord. The Chancellor's policy had succeeded in completely isolating France. Crispi's arrival and the interest aroused in the alliance were the occasion of an interesting story which was told me by George von Bunsen. Victor Emmanuel II paid a visit to Berlin not long



before his death. His first words to the old Emperor as he drove with him from the station were : " The Emperor Napoleon was my greatest friend. He did for me and for my country what I could never repay. When war was declared between Germany and France (in 1870) I wanted to help him. I would have helped him, but I was told that it would cost me my crown. That is all over and he is gone, and now I can be your true friend." The old Emperor appreciated his perfect blunt frankness and said that he loved the man for it.

There followed a visit from the Russian Emperor designed to reinvigorate the cordiality of relations which had long been cooling. The Grand Duke Nicholas had recently made a violent anti-German speech in a French warship. The Chancellor, in a conversation with my chief in the latter part of November, informed him of the intention again to increase the army, which would be brought up to a war footing of four millions. He now felt, he said, that war was inevitable for them, both on the eastern and on the western side, in a few years' time. When it came they must either conquer or disappear. They could never pay for the four million men except by success. On the first day of mobilization they would require eight hundred millions sterling. They had one hundred and twenty at Spandau. But the addition to the army was a vital necessity.

At an interview which took place between Bismarck and the Russian Emperor it came out that the latter had been furnished with a number of letters and documents purporting to be communications from Prince Reuss, the Ambassador at Vienna, to Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, with reference to Bismarck's attitude towards the principality, which, had they been genuine, would have given His Majesty ample reason to mistrust the Chancellor. These documents were now ascertained to have been forgeries from beginning to end. This source of irritation was, therefore, eliminated by the visit. An inspired communication was made to the *Kölnische Zeitung* on the subject

without mention of the names of the supposed correspondents. It stated that the source of these forgeries was easily discovered. It was of Orléanist origin. Such a suggestion would seem to have been meant to indicate Princess Clémentine, the mother of the Prince of Bulgaria. But it is quite possible that this suggestion was only put forward to conceal from the guilty parties that investigation was on the right track, and suspicion rather fell on a Russian war-party. The same evidently inspired article also stated that the interview had revealed to the Chancellor that a small but influential section of the Court in Berlin had been endeavouring to instil into the Czar the impression that Bismarck and the German Emperor were not by any means always in accord, and that he had only secured a very reluctant consent from his imperial master to a recent policy less friendly to Russia.

Now, the explanation of this concluding passage of the article current behind the scenes in Berlin is interesting in itself, and if correct it also affords one more of the many instances which show how the Chancellor made use of the press for his own personal objects. At a Court dinner which took place during the visit of the Russian Emperor the table was in horse-shoe form. In the middle sat the Kaiser with the Czar and Czarina on either hand and the other princes and princesses to his right and left. Exactly opposite the German Emperor on the inner circle was the Lord High Chamberlain, Count Stolberg-Wernigerode. Prince Bismarck was given a place on the outer circle beyond the princes, and thus well out of range of the Russian guests. He was indignant at this placing, and claimed that he ought to have sat opposite the Kaiser. Count Perponcher, who was responsible, contended that his disposition of places was perfectly correct, as the dinner had been announced to be a family and not an official party. This contention, however, the Chancellor would not accept, and he was reported to have informed Count Stolberg by letter that he ought to have refused to take the place assigned to him.



The Chancellor's claim was, I think, valid, because custom prescribed that, when a foreign sovereign was the guest of the Crown, the Minister for Foreign Affairs should take his place opposite the Sovereign, and Bismarck, as Chancellor, was actually also Minister for Foreign Affairs. On this occasion it was from his point of view of special importance that the precedent should be observed, and that he should not have been placed in a position of inferiority, which might lead the Czar to believe that there was some truth in the assertion that Emperor and Chancellor were not altogether at one in their policy towards Russia. A characteristic story, illustrating Herbert Bismarck's brusque and bull-headed manner, was told in connexion with this visit. If not true it was *ben trovato*. When the Russian Imperial train arrived the royal carriage was arrested at some little distance from the spot where the Minister for Foreign Affairs was waiting. He dashed down the platform as the Emperor was alighting, and with a rough sweep of his arm pushed aside one or two Russian chamberlains standing at the carriage door, saying as he did so : " Pardon, je suis le Comte Bismarck." At which one of them was heard to remark : " Ça explique mais n'excuse pas."

In the early autumn the Crown Prince and his family had gone to the Tyrol and northern Italy, but with the approach of winter they moved to San Remo. Sir Morell Mackenzie was summoned to the Villa Zirio early in November and thereafter never left his patient till his death. On November the 12th the *Official Gazette* announced, though not in a signed bulletin, that the Crown Prince's illness had a " carcinomatous " character. This announcement was not made in the form of a bulletin, and was not signed by any doctor. It was not until the following February that a medical report to this effect was issued. The notice in the *Gazette* becomes significant in connexion with certain circumstances which will be referred to later, and it appeared to be not unconnected with certain semi-official visits paid at this time to San Remo.

The year 1888 opened with the sense of ominous events inevitably approaching. The first day of the year was a trying one in Berlin, as it is in all those continental cities where custom prescribes that cards should be left on the whole of one's acquaintance. On behalf of the Ambassador I also had to see that the cards, which arrived in avalanches, were duly returned. I was always enviously impressed with the practical method adopted for this end by the household of the veteran Field-Marshal Moltke, no doubt quite unknown to himself. On your arrival at his house to deposit a card his porter stood in the doorway with an ample supply of his employer's cards in his hand, from which he offered you one, observing as he took yours, "And here is the Field-Marshal's." Moltke, whose years were numbered with those of the century, attended an official dinner at the Embassy this season, and he excused himself for leaving early because he said he was giving a musical party at home. A tough generation the men of 1809! They also knew how to get the most out of life.

I spent a day or two in January with my friend, Henry Cadogan, who had been transferred from Berlin to the Legation at Munich, and he took me to the *Allotria*, the artists' club or *kneipe*. Kaulbach and Defregger, the painters, were there. Lenbach was in the chair, and I sat between him and Levy, one of the great directors of orchestra. He and his colleague Fischer together projected Wagner on to two grand pianos from memory with glorious interpretation, and perfect if seemingly improvised accord. All the stars (male) of the opera were there. Songs and speeches were of the first order, and the company was as good as the beer, which is high praise. We were made welcome in Bavaria in the old days.

Towards the end of that month Lord and Lady Randolph Churchill paid a visit to the Embassy on their way back from St. Petersburg. The attraction of his acuteness and brilliancy was enhanced by a humorous geniality which gave him a particular charm. But he struck me as the most



self-confident man I had ever met, and the suddenness with which he could change his political attitude did not seem to modify his belief in the incontrovertibility of his own judgment. He was never at a loss in emphasizing his rapid generalizations on any subject, whether within or without the range of his own experience. I was one day escorting them round the Museum when the question arose whether a certain panel was painted in oil or tempera. Now, this is often a difficult point to determine and requires special knowledge and study. But he did not hesitate most dogmatically to assert that it was an oil painting, which, as a matter of fact, it was not. He can, in any case, hardly have been much interested in pictures, as he was unable to identify those in Berlin which came from the Blenheim collection.

At that time he was completely under the spell of Russia. A Russian alliance was necessary to us, necessary because with Russia we had interests which might clash. He attached little importance to drawing closer to those whose interests did not run counter to our own. After a brief conversation with the Czar he had convinced himself that that autocrat really governed his country. It was confessedly open to grave doubts how far Alexander III, who was a conspicuously honest man, was really able to make his own views prevail. But Lord Randolph admitted no question on that point. He mistrusted Bismarck profoundly. I was not disposed to disagree with him. But I found that his opinion was mainly influenced by an incident which he had witnessed during his short term of office, when he had experienced a petulant exhibition of temper from the Chancellor. Austria, he argued, had always deserted her allies. One must study history. I could not gather that he had himself studied internal developments in Germany, as he had not even heard of the important legislation for the insurance of workmen which that country was the first to initiate.

On his journey out to Russia he had called, while passing

through Berlin, on Herbert Bismarck, who betrayed some apprehension lest he should be attracted into the Russian net. Count Herbert said that he had expressed the view that for Great Britain India was the first concern, and that we ought to buy off Russian aggression by giving her ambitions a free hand in Turkey. He attached no importance to our holding Egypt and regarded the Cape route to the East as all-sufficient.

Lord Randolph told me a characteristic story of Labouchere, to whose loyalty to friends Malet had testified as among his more amiable characteristics. When Gladstone returned to office in 1886 the Duchess of Roxburghe, Lady Randolph's sister, had refused the position of Mistress of the Robes, the Duke having joined the Liberal Unionists. The Queen, it seems, in writing privately to the Duchess, had so far allowed her feelings to outrun her habitual discretion as to approve the decision. Through some indiscretion the substance of this letter became known to others, and eventually it reached the ear of Labby, who came up to Churchill in the House beaming with satisfaction and said: "I've got her, I've got her now, the old Lady at Balmoral, and I'll expose her." He then told his story, adding that he had already prepared a few pungent paragraphs for *Truth*. Lord Randolph assured him that the whole story was an invention, and begged him to suppress it. But Labby insisted that it was his *duty* to print it: "It's too good to miss." The next day Lord Randolph returned to the charge, but this time he took the line that the publication would have the most unpleasant consequences for his family, as it would inevitably be assumed that they were responsible for the betrayal of confidence. Labby allowed himself to be persuaded and suppressed his notes.

Among the seniors in our service there was still a living tradition of Labouchere's brief and stormy period of diplomatic life. Many of the anecdotes which illustrate his remarkable and somewhat malicious humour are no doubt on record. But things which were of common report



forty years ago are forgotten now, and one of the stories which they used to tell me at least is worth saving. When he was attached to the Legation, as it then still was, at Washington, he received one day a caller who, looking very superciliously at so young an official, merely said: "I want to see your boss." "I am not aware," said Labby, "to what part of my person you refer, but whatever it is, it is entirely at your disposal." He was a most courteous attaché, and he resented discourtesy in others. To another visitor who asked to see the Minister, he expressed his regret that his chief was not at home, and inquired whether he could not himself be of service to him. "No," said the visitor, "I'll wait. I won't have anything to do with understrappers." Labby offered him a chair and withdrew. An hour passed, and the caller then asked to see the young gentleman who had received him again, and inquired whether he thought the Ambassador was soon likely to be in. "No," said Labby, "I do not. He is travelling in Canada."

Early in February the *Official Gazette* gave publicity "in the interests of peace" to the text of the Secret Treaty of October 7th, 1879, between Germany and Austria, by which either State pledged itself to assist the other with all its strength in the event of an attack by Russia, and to be absolutely neutral if any other power was at war with either. On the evening when it appeared the Postmaster, Dr. von Stephan, was giving a dinner party at the early hour traditional in Berlin. None of his guests had as yet seen the *Gazette*, which only reached subscribers at 6.30 p.m. He had the text of the Treaty in his hand and read its terms to the assembly. His guests did not conceal their somewhat aggressive satisfaction, when suddenly they became aware that the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, Count Muraviev, was among their number. The situation was extremely awkward, but Muraviev saved it with great presence of mind, observing that, after all, that instrument dated from many years before, and that since it was con-

cluded; things had changed greatly. He can, however, have preserved few illusions as to the prevailing feeling in Berlin. Three days after the publication of the Treaty the new Army Bill and the necessary vote of credit were carried through the Reichstag. The Chancellor made a great retrospective historical speech in which all the history recorded had been of his own making. His political foresight was, in this case, more than justified by results, and after the double coup of the publication and the Army Bill the pulse of Europe seemed to beat more calmly.

On the 9th of February we learned that tracheotomy had been performed on the Crown Prince. No one any longer doubted that the disease was cancer, and indeed a significant bulletin was now issued at San Remo, signed also by Mackenzie himself, which recognized that the disease displayed carcinomatous symptoms. Though pains were taken to exercise discretion in our presence, we could not be ignorant of the prevailing feeling to which free expression was given in Berlin society, and it was nothing less than brutal in its criticisms of the Crown Princess. It was she who had brought the English doctor, whose diagnosis had been incorrect, and had had the German doctors set aside; it was her influence which had prevailed at the outset to stop an operation which would have saved the Prince's life. One hoped at the time that none of these criticisms reached the ear of the patient. But they were reflected in certain organs of the press, and I afterwards learned that he insisted on seeing all the papers and often commented with bitterness on the attitude of his countrymen. Bergmann now only gave him till April to live, and this operation was regarded as the beginning of the end.

The night of the 6th and 7th of March the old Emperor, rising from his bed, fell and remained in a state of syncope throughout the greater part of the ensuing day. On the 8th his condition became very grave, and the sacrament was administered. By some error a report of his death reached the German Embassy in London prematurely. After mid-



night, as our messenger could no longer obtain access to the palace, I went there myself and learned that the doctors did not expect him to last through the night. The Chancellor had left at six in the afternoon. He died at 8.30 a.m. on the morning of the 9th. The Ambassador saw Prince Bismarck and learned from him that the Crown Prince, now the Emperor Frederick, would return forthwith to the palace at Charlottenburg. Exigences of state required his immediate presence. He was, he said, nervous regarding Mackenzie's arrival. Rightly or wrongly public opinion believed that his treatment of the case had been his patient's death warrant. This view had been greatly fostered by medical professional jealousies. The question was one in which the opinion of laymen was valueless, but an odious controversy had been raised which embittered the new Emperor's latter days, and if the German press at this time was detestable, the English press was also not blameless. In Bismarck's tribute to the old Emperor's memory in the Reichstag he said that two things had illumined the evening of his life, the sympathy which all the world had testified for his son's illness and the unanimity of the nation in responding to the demands of the Government by its acceptance of the new Army Bill. This had revealed to him that the union was real, and that his life's work had not been in vain.

The Emperor William died sitting up, and the body remained so for some time while sketches were made. The lying-in-state was very impressive. The Court church was draped and the only light came from the candelabra round the bier. Soft music played continuously. The area of the church was a vast pile of wreaths and the hot air was heavy with the scent of flowers. The colonels of all the regiments in Berlin formed a guard of honour, and the banner was held by a general. The old Emperor lay supported by cushions as if quietly sleeping on a bed with the head a little on one side, and on his breast were the iron crosses of 1813, 1814 and 1870.

The new Emperor and Empress arrived at Charlottenburg shortly before midnight on the 11th. By special request no one met them, but Sir Edward had been instructed by the Queen to go to the Palace. Mackenzie there told him that his patient had borne the journey well. The Prince of Wales with Prince Albert Victor arrived in Berlin on the 14th. We managed to find room for the numerous staff in the Embassy, where my domestic duties were very onerous. The Chancellor called upon the Prince the following morning. I was made aware of his arrival by the loud cheering in the street. By the time he left the crowd had grown so great that the police had difficulty in clearing a passage. It seemed as if public opinion, apprehensive of what the new reign might bring, was anxious to make a demonstration of unabated confidence in Bismarck. He said that he had received a royal command not to go to the funeral on account of his health, both from the Empress Augusta, and from the new Emperor. He had protested to the latter that it would be very hard for him not to follow his old master to the grave. The Emperor Frederick, who had not spoken since his return, only looked at him and touched his heart, as if to say: "How much harder for me!"

The new Emperor's address to his people and his rescript to the Chancellor, drawn up, as Prince Bismarck informed us, by the Emperor himself without any official corrections or retouches, gave universal satisfaction. People of the most divergent political views equally found something to praise in it.

The funeral procession was not to my mind particularly impressive, far less so than that which I had recently witnessed in Munich. It rather resembled the eighteenth-century pageants illustrated in old prints. The long line of the Linden had been converted into a mourning avenue with black pillars supporting urns of fire, linked by festoons of crape and evergreens. Underfoot the ground was white with snow. The Guard regiments marched before their



dead Emperor. The Royal family, the court and the foreign representatives followed. The funeral car was drawn by eight black horses, and the cords of the baldaquin were held by generals of the war of 1870. The majority of those, in fact, who marched in the procession had taken their part in the making of the German Empire. The solemnity of the occasion was not enhanced by the behaviour of the spectators, whose attitude was by no means reverent, and who were constantly in dispute with the rather over-zealous Berlin police. The most suggestive note was the great inscription on the inner face of the Brandenburg gate, which bore the words, "Vale Senex Imperator." The Prince of Wales remained until the 18th, which fell upon a Sunday. At the eleventh hour I was called upon to organize what was called a small impromptu dinner party for the evening of his departure. A tentative list of twenty-four eventually swelled to thirty-two. I hardly know how we managed it, but M. Xavier, the chef, was equal to the occasion, and it passed off as if it had been arranged for weeks.

Now, for the first time I met Sir Morell Mackenzie, a strong and masterful personality, but not to me a sympathetic one. Due allowance must be made for the difficulty of his position. While he retained the entire confidence of the Emperor and Empress to the last—and he had certainly preserved his patient's life long enough to secure his succession—there was hardly anyone in Berlin who took his side. I could not but resent the manner in which he repeatedly pressed his claims for a decoration, as though he seemed to be anxious lest the end should come before he received it. Chauvinism and racial feeling no doubt played an undue part in the medical controversy. But he did not improve his position by his own want of tact in many details. A friend who had been in attendance throughout the long residence at San Remo, where the Emperor had been kept in complete seclusion, remarked to me with bitterness that a member of Mackenzie's family had been

admitted to close intimacy with the young princesses, and that although the German correspondents had respected the desire for privacy of the royal family, correspondence regarding their daily life had been transmitted from this source to an American paper. Some time afterwards one of the younger officers of the household, with whom I had been on intimate terms, and who remained the loyal servant of the Empress long after her husband's death, at the expense, as it then seemed, of his own career, spoke to me very frankly about this grim period. He admitted fully the great value of Mackenzie's services, and himself felt little doubt that the operation originally proposed, for preventing which Mackenzie was responsible, would, so far from saving the Emperor's life, probably have ended fatally. He gave him every credit for having treated the case skilfully. But for reasons on which I need not enlarge, he said that it had been painful to him to see the Emperor and Empress so completely in his hands. To Germans with their traditional ideas of the dignity of their Sovereign, it was odious to realize that at Charlottenburg Mackenzie was in constant intercourse with the twenty-eight correspondents of newspapers for whom he had procured cards of entry, while the palace was closed to almost every one else, and he resented seeing these people, not by any means the best class of journalists, hanging about within a few yards of the Emperor's room. Mackenzie always gained his own way by threatening to appeal to the Sovereign, and appeared incapable of taking a hint or accepting a refusal. Rather than allow the unfortunate Emperor to be harassed every one felt obliged to give way. But they could not forgive him. This temperate criticism was confirmed by that of many others who were in a position to know. It must, on the other hand, be remembered that this much-tried man was fighting a difficult battle alone. Every one's hand was against him, and he was continuously and violently attacked in the reactionary press. At least, he never spared himself, and worked incessantly and devotedly.



There was, indeed, through all this grim period to my mind a conspicuous absence of chivalry at Berlin. People professed to love and admire the Emperor Frederick, and yet they could not resist embittering his last days by abusing the Empress. They even expended their humour on a dying man. The story was everywhere current that a printer's error in his proclamation to the people had described him as *Friedrich der Britte* instead of *der Dritte*. It was a manifest invention, as in print the numeral and not the word would have been used. I could not resist expressing my feelings on the subject at a party where the alleged misprint seemed to be regarded as an excellent joke. Here was a man who was not only the Sovereign, but one who had served his country greatly, maintaining a high ideal of obligation even during the anarchy of war, a man of blameless life and character. If ever personal sentiments should have been held in reserve, and all should have united in making the last phase of his hard and brave struggle brighter by sympathy and respect, surely this was the occasion.

A curious ceremony which we had to attend was the *Trauercour*, or mourning reception. It was held, of course, by the Empress alone. All the ladies were in black with veils of crape, and the men in full uniform with crape upon the sword knot and the arm. Some of the old Court ladies were in tears as they passed before the Empress. I hope they may have been sincere. Even on that occasion some people found occasion to criticize the Empress's mourning as being English. In what respect I cannot tell. It seemed as orthodox and grim as any Court ceremonial could prescribe.

The Chancellor had a horror of ladies in black. His birthday was on the 1st of April, and it was customary to leave off mourning when calling to offer congratulations. But many ladies held that a great court mourning must constitute an exception to any rule. The sight of so many ladies swathed in crape got on his nerves and he sent word

to his porter at last to admit no more who presented themselves in black, leaving it to that functionary to make such explanations as he could to the numerous callers.

Four days later he sent for the Ambassador and made a most serious communication to him. He was about to send in his resignation. On the following day practically the whole story as he had told it, with the exception of certain details to which I shall not refer, appeared in the *Cologne Gazette*, first in the form of a message from Vienna announcing his impending resignation, and later in an article explaining all the circumstances. There was, therefore, no further obligation to be reticent. Some years earlier the question had been discussed of a marriage between the Emperor Frederick's second daughter and Prince Alexander of Battenberg, while the latter was still Prince of Bulgaria, a project which the Chancellor had strenuously opposed. The *Cologne Gazette* now announced that the proposal had been revived, and it was suggested that the Queen of England was coming to Berlin to support the Prince's suit. If it were persisted in the Chancellor could only resign. But it was impossible that the Chancellor should be sacrificed to a scheme of such a nature. Prince Alexander still remained the hope of the Bulgarians, and the enemy of the Russian Emperor. It was impossible that such an alliance could take place.

The Chancellor, who asserted that the Emperor himself was opposed to the project but had been unable to make his will felt, sent in his resignation, and only subsequently to taking this extreme step did he obtain an interview with the Empress, when the matter seems to have been arranged without difficulty. He had given the Ambassador to understand that he had not been able to see the Empress earlier. But he had not tried to do so before he put the whole thing into the press, and quite gratuitously dragged in the name of the Queen. The statements of the *Cologne Gazette* were moreover reproduced in the semi-official *North German Gazette*. From Moritz Busch's *Bismarck* we learn how his



jackal of the press was furnished with the data to attack "the foreign influences working against me—the reigning lady and her mother." I learned later that when Busch's book came to be published certain expressions had to be toned down. For it appears that he had introduced some very offensive remarks of his master about the Queen. It was brought to the Chancellor's knowledge without delay that there was no ground for the statements which had appeared in the press about Queen Victoria, and that indeed Her Majesty was quite against the rumoured marriage project. Nevertheless the attacks on the Queen continued for some time and it was necessary to bring strong pressure to bear at the Wilhelmstrasse in order to get them stopped.

Now what had really happened—as I learned shortly afterwards—was this. Prince Alexander had written to their Majesties explaining that he had not attended the funeral of the Emperor William for reasons which they could readily appreciate. But now he would be glad if he might be allowed to come and pay his respects to the Emperor Frederick. How such a message may have been interpreted, or what anticipations it may have aroused, and therefore what real grounds there may have been for Bismarck's suspicions—he asserted that they were fully justified—I do not pretend to know. The probability is that the question had been revived in some form, and Bismarck generally heard of all that went on at Charlottenburg. The fact, however, remains incontrovertible that as soon as he heard of the proposed visit, without having seen or having tried to see the Empress, acting no doubt on some information conveyed to him by his agents in the palace, he made public the story which appeared in the press, and threatened a crisis by resignation. *The Times* correspondent in Berlin most reprehensibly telegraphed to his paper that the Queen was urging this marriage project. It was therefore not to be wondered at that the German press forced the note which Busch had been instructed to emphasize, and that we were reminded that British interests could receive

no consideration so long as the British Sovereign acted in a manner so unfriendly to Germany.

What was the Chancellor's reason for producing a crisis which was really of his own making ? He seldom acted without mature calculation, and rarely from temper. Opinion in Berlin was disposed to agree that there he had miscalculated. Public comments in Russia expressed the view that the best way to disarm Prince Alexander and preclude any renewal of pretensions to the Bulgarian throne, would be to give him a divisional command in Germany, and to marry him to a German Princess. The argument of a Russian protest could hardly therefore be urged. It was moreover regarded as doubtful whether Prince Alexander himself desired such a match. No one that I came across in Berlin at the time approved of Bismarck's tactics. He had a large section of the press at his command, while those who were attacked had no means of replying. The course he adopted seemed worse than ungenerous. It was a cruel moment to have chosen to make a public scandal of a matter which could in any case, as the event had proved, have been readily arranged by discussion in the proper quarter. The conclusion to which we came at the time, a conclusion which was shared by many of those best able to judge the significance of this unpleasant incident, was that Bismarck designedly took the opportunity at the outset of a new reign to demonstrate that the throne was not absolute, and it was thought probable that his intention might also be to give a premonitory lesson to the heir-apparent, who was supposed to have leanings towards the *Junker* party, always inimical to the Chancellor.

Some months afterwards, in August, 1888, I read in the *Nouvelle Revue* a document which Madame Adam asserted to be a memorandum placed before the Emperor Frederick by the Chancellor in regard to the Battenberg marriage scheme, stating his objections and the reasons why he must resign if it were persisted in. It referred to an alleged letter of Queen Victoria of the 26th of March, urging the match.



This is sufficient to stamp it as a forgery. The Queen, who was at Florence at the time, knew nothing of the project, and when the press attacks began a disavowal was sent to Berlin spontaneously, before the communication from the Embassy, which had to go through London, could have reached the Villa Palmieri.<sup>1</sup>

I have endeavoured to record this incident without prejudice. However valid the reasons may have been for the Chancellor's suspicions regarding the revival of a plan which he had already once defeated, it appears impossible to justify his handling of the matter, and least of all the indefensible attacks on the Queen, for which he was in the first instance responsible. That there would be danger from the idealist and yet authoritative character of the Empress, when she should come into direct conflict with Bismarck and the old Prussian conceptions, had been foreseen by Queen Victoria, who had expressed her preoccupation to Lord Ampthill. But Bismarck himself in his reminiscences admits that the Empress shared with the Emperor the conviction that it was necessary in the interests of the dynasty that he should be maintained in office.

The battle between the doctors continued, to the infinite disgust of decent people. An unfavourable development of symptoms accompanied by some fever was ascribed by Mackenzie to Bergmann's clumsiness in endeavouring to insert a new tube, which Bramann, the other doctor in attendance, was more successful in accomplishing. He contended that Bergmann's manipulations had caused a flow of blood, and that to this the symptoms were due. Party politics had now begun to enter into the controversy.

<sup>1</sup> The story of Queen Victoria's alleged support to the marriage has been repeated in a recent biographical study which has been very widely read. It is evident that the author was misled by Busch, who was himself misled by Bismarck when he instructed him to start the press campaign. In justice to the memory of the Queen it is desirable that a misapprehension so widely circulated should be corrected. (See *Queen Victoria*, by Lytton Strachey, p. 284.)

The Liberal Frankfort organ was ranged in opposition to the Government press and the *Cologne Gazette*, which was reported to be inspired by Bergmann, and which was persistent in its attacks on Great Britain. Mackenzie, who daily received insulting and threatening letters, inevitably threw in his lot with the opposition. Two typical cases may be quoted of the malignity of the Government press in its endeavours to depreciate the Empress in the eyes of the public. The *Cologne Gazette* circulated a story that one of the attendants nursing the Emperor had had to be discharged and that an Englishman had been substituted for him. When it had to be admitted that this story was entirely untrue, the paper was disingenuous enough to observe, "it seems they had changed their mind." In the spring there had been disastrous floods in Posen, and the Empress went to visit the scene, and was received by a deputation of Polish ladies. The papers, including the semi-official ones, announced that an address had been presented to her in French, and that in view of the grave incorrectness of such a proceeding, she should have declined to receive it. Count Seckendorff, who accompanied the Empress, told me that no such address had ever been presented. It was quite possible that some of the Polish ladies might have talked French, a language with which some of them were more familiar, but no document of any kind was presented to Her Majesty. The Prussians seemed to resent the very existence of the Poles in German Poland. A year later the Empress referred to this incident and told me that she had at the time complained to Bismarck about these misrepresentations. His only remark was: "My press people did this without consulting me."

Queen Victoria had decided on her homeward journey from the South of Europe to pay a visit to her daughter and son-in-law at Berlin, and the Chancellor promised that she should have an enthusiastic reception. It was only a fortnight before that he had set Busch to attack "the reigning lady and her mother," and his present cordiality almost



seemed to indicate that he felt a certain remorse for the mistake which he was now aware he had made. The Queen arrived at the Charlottenburg Station at 8.45 in the morning looking brilliantly well and fresh after a two nights' journey in the train. That evening the Ambassador dined with the Sovereigns, while the rest of the Embassy after dining with the staff joined the family circle later. I was now for the first time personally presented to the Queen. Her dignity and in a certain sense her grace, for so very small a woman who was nearing her seventieth year, were remarkable. The Empress Frederick, of whom I had seen so much during my four years at Berlin in happier times, told me that she had heard I was to leave—I had been appointed to Athens and expected to join my new post in a month or two's time. She said that I must get the appointment cancelled and remain.

On the following day the Queen and the Empress drove into Berlin. It was a *Busz-Tag* (a public holiday, like our Bank Holidays). The road was lined with people all the way from Charlottenburg. I have never seen the Berlin people, who were generally undemonstrative, so enthusiastic, and their cheers were a striking answer to the pessimists who had asserted that the Empress dared not show herself in public, and that the Queen would do well not to come. The contrast to the public attitude on the occasion of the Russian Emperor's visit was very striking. It must be remembered that the people of Berlin were for the most part Liberal in their political tendencies, and only read the Liberal papers, which were whole-heartedly on the side of the Emperor and Empress, whereas the reactionary organs, which we had for our sins to study because they represented the government and the ruling caste, were always those which attacked the English doctor and the Empress.

The Queen came to the Embassy and received Prince Bismarck. He was delighted with his reception and propitiated Her Majesty by saying that her recent journey had been of the greatest value. She had been like a general visiting

the outposts. First she had been to Italy, then to Austria and lastly she had come to Germany. Her visit would greatly strengthen the alliance of the Central Powers. In the evening there was a ceremonious dinner at Charlottenburg, which we all attended. The Queen and the Empress sat in the middle together, and opposite them the Imperial Chancellor, not this time, as at the dinner to the Czar, far away from the centre. Bismarck was in the highest spirits, selecting one of the biggest bonbons, which bore a portrait of the Empress, and putting it away with much ceremony over his heart. An air of cordiality prevailed and the recent storm seemed to have quite blown over. A strange artificial insincere world it was in which I was living !

Early in May there was a remarkable if necessarily temporary improvement in the Emperor's condition, and Sir M. Mackenzie was in much better spirits about his patient, and spoke of plans for the summer. The Prince of Wales paid a second visit to Berlin for the marriage of Prince Henry to Princess Irene of Hesse. On his arrival, late after dinner, the Crown Prince and Prince Henry came on with him to supper at the Embassy and the latter then told me that a month earlier they had hardly hoped that his father would live to see the wedding. But he had that satisfaction, and on the 1st of June he was safely transferred to the palace near Potsdam which had so long been the summer home of the family and which now received the name of Friedrichskron. Meanwhile the relations between France and Germany were deteriorating, and the anti-Russian feeling in Austria was growing acute. An extremely high-handed attitude was adopted towards France, tending to build up a sort of Chinese wall against her subjects. The Government asserted that inasmuch as seventeen years had done nothing to alleviate the hatred displayed by the French, and as it was being rendered impossible for Germans to enter France, intercourse must now be restricted. New passport regulations consequently made it obligatory for any Frenchman to obtain a *visa* at the German Embassy before crossing the



German frontier. This entailed a preliminary inquiry, to complete which would take about three weeks. It therefore was tantamount to a virtual closing of the frontier. In justification of this policy two instances were quoted of Germans having been turned back from France. The measure appeared to us rather to be one of retaliation for the recent political successes of Boulanger.

A fortnight after the move to Friedrichskron the crisis in the Emperor's condition took place. The disease had progressed far beyond the larynx, and only artificial nourishment was now possible. Inflammation of the lungs began. At nine on the evening of June the 14th we learned that a military cordon had been drawn round the palace and that no one was allowed in or out. It was however removed at the request of the Empress. The Ambassador had been there in the morning. He found the Empress collected, but deeply depressed. There were already indications of the desertion of old friends, even of those who had owed them everything, and who were already looking to the rising star. The Emperor remained conscious almost till the last, writing instructions from time to time in pencil. He died on the morning of Friday, June the 15th, apparently without a struggle. Once more a cordon of the Lehr-Battalion surrounded the Palace. The Ambassador went down again in the evening, and was informed that the wishes of the Empress were to be respected in every matter. There would be no autopsy, and the funeral ceremony would take place in the Friedenskirche at Potsdam, quietly in the presence of only relations and friends. The autopsy was nevertheless carried out, although the new Emperor supported his mother in her wish to suppress it. It appears that the law required that the cause of death should be established. It should also be recorded in justice that the Empress at this time spoke of the kindness of her son. Other people put ideas into his head which he would not otherwise have considered. The question was, it seems, mooted of having the papers of the attendant physician examined. The Minister

of Justice told the Emperor that he had the power to do so, not the right. The military cordon was removed from the Palace on the afternoon of the 16th. One of the most devoted of the late Emperor's household expressed to me his indignation with the Chancellor for having been very cold to the Empress. The dying Emperor had not long before put his wife's hand into Bismarck's, with a look full of significance, an appeal to him to be good to her when he was gone. His antagonism to the Empress was irreconcilable. They were a hard unyielding race, the Bismarcks. Had the Emperor's life been prolonged there would no doubt have been more and more friction, and possibly a definite break in a few months' time. After all it did not take long for the new Emperor to part company with him. The same old friend said that it had sickened him with human nature to witness the ingratitude of those who had received countless favours.

It was a great tragedy, this long-drawn-out agony and the premature close of a gracious and beneficent life upon the threshold of realization. I had had very many opportunities of seeing the Emperor as Crown Prince in the intimacy of his home life, and had a sincere admiration for the man whom Busch, as the mouthpiece of Prince Bismarck, has written down a mediocrity. Kindly, sincerely appreciative of any little service rendered, he seemed not only the ideal prince, but one who in any station in life would have commanded affection and regard. In early years he had somewhat emphasized his antagonism to Bismarck, which was represented as implying dissent from his father's policy. But he had quickly learned the lesson of reserve, and became rather an exception to the traditions of the Hohenzollern family, in which the eldest son has been so frequently the leader of the opposition to the reigning sovereign ; and this in spite of his having had to wait unusually long for his inheritance, and of his being commonly regarded as subject to an influence which the old Prussians resented as tainted with the liberalism of English political conceptions. His



remarkable self-restraint was at any rate not due to want of character. He had had the nerve to stand out in vain for moderation and conciliation in 1870, and in the controversy which arose over the establishment of the German Empire his firm and determined attitude offered a strong contrast to the doubts and hesitations of others. This much was made clear by the publication soon after his death of a diary which Bismarck vainly endeavoured to brand as apocryphal. Could he have survived in health and vigour of mind for some twenty years more of active life, many things might have taken a different turn in Germany. The struggle would no doubt have been a hard one. The intransigent Prussian of the ascendant class profoundly mistrusted the influence of the English wife, who had never known how to conceal her opinions, whose hand would have been suspected in every action. But the mass of the people would have been with him in his endeavour to give effect to many schemes of reform which he had long contemplated, and with time the voice of the mass would have become articulate. The course of events which culminated at last in the tragedy of 1914 might then have taken a different direction.

The Prince and Princess of Wales with Prince Albert Victor arrived on the 17th, and room was found for an unusual number of guests in the Embassy. I gave up my rooms and retired to an improvised camp in the Secretary of Embassy's office. The memory of that pathetic funeral on the 18th of June remains vivid and haunting. The big semicircle of the garden and the Park road which led from Friedrichskron to Sans Souci were lined with troops, but there was no crowd. It was a private ceremony, and the general public were excluded. On the left of the semicircle were the infantry, on the right the Gardes du Corps with black cuirasses. There was a preliminary ceremony in the Jasper Gallery; then the procession formed and the chanting was replaced by the military bands, stationed in different places and extending up the avenue, each taking up the other in succession with a weird melancholy air, and at moments all

playing in unison. All the while muffled drums continued to beat. A detachment of Lifeguards led the procession, the clergy followed, certain deputations, the royal pages, the Ministers of State and then the hearse covered with wreaths. The late Emperor's charger followed the coffin. Then came the royal family, the diplomatic representatives and the court. It was a small procession, but deeply impressive which I watched, gradually losing itself in the green of the avenue to the sound of the muffled drums. The three months' reign had inevitably left no record of achievement—but perhaps its very failure and its spirit of sacrifice had inaugurated new ideals, and therefore there was ground to hope it had not been in vain.

The new Emperor's proclamations gave rise to some comment from the fact that the one addressed to the army and navy came out first, and that addressed to the people followed. This was considered significant, especially as the Emperor Frederick had given precedence to his proclamation to the people—but it would not have been reasonable to lay too much stress on this contrast. The first act of a new reign is to take the oath of allegiance from the troops, and it would be natural that the Emperor should desire his proclamation to be read to them on that occasion. The message to the people was finely conceived with its filial tribute of admiration for his father, to which more than half the text was devoted.

It might have been hoped that with the Emperor's death the battle of the doctors and their partisans would have ceased, but it broke out once more in a particularly aggressive form with insinuations and suggestions which roused a fresh controversy in the press. Now as a preface to what follows I will first quote a passage from Bismarck's *Reflections and Reminiscences*, which were only published ten years later. He there says: "As the story that in 1887, after his return from Ems, the Crown Prince signed a document in which, in the event of his surviving his father, he renounced his succession to the throne in favour of Prince William, has



found its way into an English work on the Emperor William II, I will state that there is not a shadow of truth in the story. It is also a fable that, as in 1887 was maintained in many circles and believed in others, an heir to the throne who suffers from an incurable physical complaint is by the family laws of the Hohenzollern excluded from the succession. The family laws contain no provision on the matter, any more than does the text of the Prussian constitution.”<sup>1</sup>

This statement is clear and categorical. The new Emperor, however, informed our military attaché in conversation that Bismarck was furious with Mackenzie after he had admitted the disease to be cancer, and would not let the matter rest. The Chancellor himself, moreover, in conversation with a personage to whom he would hardly have spoken without weighing his words, used language to the following effect: “By our constitution the late Emperor could not reign. We were in reality governed by a woman, and in Prussia the Salic law does not exist.” To this remark however I would not attach undue importance, knowing how in reporting conversations the sense and values of particular words may be misapprehended or over-emphasized. Bismarck might well have been expected to say something approximating to these words, implying that the late Emperor had been too weak and ill to actually attend to affairs of State, and that the Empress had had to do everything for him, which was tantamount to her reigning. But in addition to such second-hand reports there is a document which cannot be passed over.

On the evening of June 26th the officious *North German Gazette* published an article of a vitriolic character regarding Mackenzie, commenting on a report in the *National Zeitung* to the effect that he had admitted to a correspondent in Holland that he knew the disease to be cancer, but that he could not state this because a certain group would have prevented the Prince from reigning. Now this article, we

<sup>1</sup> Bismarck's *Reflections and Reminiscences*, Vol. ii, pp. 330-1. (Smith Elder, 1888.)

were privately informed, was sent from the Foreign Office, over which Count Herbert Bismarck presided, for immediate insertion and, though the editorial staff were reluctant to print it, they had to do so. Its terms are difficult to reconcile with the passage quoted above from Bismarck's memoirs. It ran as follows ;

The *National-Zeitung* has in its evening edition of the 23rd instant published an article on Dr. Mackenzie, in which the communications recently made by that doctor to a Dutch journalist, profoundly interesting to a wide circle of readers, are discussed. It happens that five days earlier a Polish newspaper, the *Kuryer Warszawski*, had information closely analogous to that which Dr. Mackenzie gave to his interviewer at The Hague. From this we may conclude that the Polish-Radical staff, with which the ostensible miracle doctor (Heilkunstler) Mackenzie, who now appears as a political agent, surrounded himself for his own advertising glorification in the press, have now returned to their native country.

This Polish newspaper writes : " We are of opinion that Dr. Mackenzie as the most eminent authority on the larynx in Europe recognized the illness of the Emperor Frederick to be cancer just as early as Dr. Schrötter and the other doctors. He was, however, not only the doctor, but also the man of confidence of the Emperor and the Empress, and it was important not to declare the illness of the Crown Prince prematurely and so deprive him of the possibility of mounting the throne. The Emperor Frederick desired in his own interest and in that of his wife as well as for high moral and practical considerations to reign, if only for a brief period. It was thanks to Morell Mackenzie that this was accomplished."

With regard to the foregoing paragraph, we desire to observe that the last sentence but one contains a positive misrepresentation. The Emperor Frederick, who had the highest possible conception of the obligations and the position of an Emperor, *had allowed no doubt to prevail, that he would not assume the Government, if it were placed beyond doubt that he was incurably affected by cancer.*<sup>1</sup> This was in conformity with his lofty and unselfish mentality, while of those who might eventually be called upon to take the responsibility all were firmly resolved to spare the suffering Emperor the humiliation of raising the question, so long as he did not himself assume the initiative. As this was well-known, it became an object to those who, for motives which we are unable to control, sought to bring the Emperor Frederick to the throne, *even in spite of actual incapacity to reign,*<sup>2</sup> to deceive him as to his real condition.

"Now that Dr. Mackenzie has left the German frontier behind him, it would appear to be his concern to save what he can of his

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<sup>1, 2</sup> These passages are italicized in the original.



medical reputation. He consequently abandons all the scruples which bound him in Germany, in order not to fall under the reproach of having been unworthy of confidence as a physician. As they say in England, he had the choice of being either a fool or a knave.

According to his own admission, Mackenzie regarded it as his principal duty to play a political part, leaving entirely on one side the medical, for which perhaps he was conscious of his own incompetence.

In the interests of the history of our times it is well that this should be clearly established; we now know that an English doctor of no particular account, (*ein unbedeutender englischer Arzt*) with radical political tendencies, took it upon himself to play the part of a privy counsellor and to seek to intervene in deciding the destiny of the German Nation.

The *Frankfurter Zeitung* replied on the two following days to this article from what it described as the organ of the Imperial Chancellor, expressing surprise that the grave should hardly have been allowed to close over the late Emperor, before the Cartell-press reopened its campaign against the English doctor. And so the bitter controversy began afresh. Sir Morell Mackenzie wrote to the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* in Berlin, and told him that he had never used the words he was reported to have used by the Dutch correspondent. He was travelling incognito and trying to avoid all questioners. An individual, however, got into his room at an hotel at The Hague and said he only wished to put two questions to him. He asked him: "When did you admit the disease to be cancer?" To this he replied: "We were all agreed about that in February." He then asked was it true that if he had admitted it to be cancer the Emperor would never have ascended the throne? And to this Mackenzie stated his reply to have been: "I cannot tell." He also wrote to Dr. Krause that he had declined to answer that question. The fact that he signed the bulletin of February, 1888, at San Remo, which announced the disease to be carcinomatous, before the final illness and death of William I, seems to dispose of the contention that the Emperor Frederick would not have reigned but for the suppression of the real nature of his malady.

From the above evidence which I have once more endeavoured to state without prejudice, what conclusions can be drawn? It is difficult to believe that the article in the *North German Gazette* published by superior order can have been prepared without the Chancellor's imprimatur, even if his son at the Foreign Office was more directly responsible for it. How can the statement in that article regarding the Emperor's avowed intention not to accept the succession, if it were beyond doubt that he was suffering from cancer, be reconciled with the statement in Bismarck's memoirs quoted above? It is true that in the memoirs he only denies that the Emperor *signed* a document to such effect, but to depend on such a plea to explain the inconsistency would be rank casuistry, and the passage concludes by affirming that there "is not a shadow of truth in the story." The mysterious paragraph inserted in the official *Gazette*, without the signature of any of the attendant doctors, in November, 1887, stating the disease to be cancer, suggests some definite motive for making such an announcement at that particular time, and the presumption seems justifiable that those who mistrusted the succession of a liberal Emperor hoped to induce the Crown Prince Frederick to take the initiative referred to in the article.

Three weeks after the funeral I went to Friedrichskron to carry a letter which had to be delivered personally. The Empress asked to see me and I spent some time with her. Alternating between tears and smiles she spoke in terms of worship of her memories of the Emperor, and with bitter indignation of the campaign which was now being carried on against herself. He had waited so long and so patiently to be able to accomplish all he had in mind to do,—not suddenly or violently—but he had every right to expect to outlive the Chancellor and intended gradually to soften the character of his harsher ordinances. Every one misunderstood, believed him to have been influenced, and she was made the object of their attack. It seemed to be a tradition in Prussia to attack the wives of sovereigns. The



Empress Augusta had suffered, and Queen Louise when she was working her hardest in the country's interest was rewarded with the outcry : " Why does a woman mix herself up in politics ? " I suggested that Queen Louise had become a national heroine to-day. " Yes," the Empress replied, " but what use is that to *her* ! " She spoke of Mackenzie with feelings of profound gratitude, admitting that his ways differed from the ways of people here ; but he had shown unlimited devotion, working day and night ; for all the work fell upon him ; the other physicians were only consultative. And what was his reward ? I endeavoured to urge the Empress not to read these press attacks, but she said she must defend her husband's memory. It was then that she told me he had insisted on having all the newspapers during his illness, and occasionally he had written on slips of paper to her : " I am ashamed of my countrymen when I read these things."

She was broken-hearted at having to leave Friedrichskron, where they had planted every tree and flower, where her children had been born, where her husband had been born and had died. But it was inevitable. It was the finest of all the palaces, and must now be otherwise employed. She spoke of the rumour that a report on the illness was to be drawn up by the doctors who were not in immediate attendance, to the exclusion of those who were. She had begged to be spared a public discussion of so painful and intimate a subject. Finally, the Empress then told me she was anxious to do something for the benefit of the Hospital for Diseases of the Throat, and asked me to write a biography of the Emperor Frederick, for which she would herself prepare an introduction. The proceeds of the sale would be given to the funds of the Hospital. The Prince of Wales before leaving Berlin had also mentioned this matter to me and expressed the wish that I should undertake it. I could not of course do so without the authorization of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. But Lord Salisbury readily assented to the proposal. As this publication led to certain

very disagreeable incidents which will be referred to in due course, I mention the genesis of the volume now.

In spite of the petition of the Empress the report of the German doctors was issued without delay. It was written with great passion and animus and implied grave accusations against Mackenzie. It was asserted that the operation contemplated in the first instance was one of a comparatively slight nature, involving no danger. Only a small swelling of about half a centimetre in diameter would have been removed. Yet when the matter was first reported to the Ambassador both by the Crown Princess and by the Chancellor himself, who intervened to stop the operation, both of them spoke of its extremely critical character. The report further stated that Mackenzie recognized the malady as having the appearance of cancer in November. A few days later I was again at Friedrichskron on a similar mission. The Empress was out driving and while waiting I had some conversation with Seckendorff, who had never left the family through the long period of the illness, and was now taking a brief holiday. He told me that in November, 1887, Dr. Schrötter had plainly told the Emperor that he was suffering from cancer and confirmed Mackenzie's having then also agreed that the disease was malignant. The contention, therefore, that the Crown Prince was deceived by Mackenzie had no validity. He further traversed a statement in the report by Dr. Bramann that he was never allowed to see the patient until he was called in to perform tracheotomy, Bramann had been invited to a consultation which took place some ten days before the actual operation. As there were three doctors examining the throat every few hours it had been considered advisable not to harass the patient unnecessarily by adding to their number. When the Empress returned she characterized the report as wicked; it had got upon her nerves and she could not sleep. People were beginning to ask why Mackenzie did not reply to the charges which it contained. I submitted that I had equally heard people say that his attitude of silence was by far the



more dignified. This view appeared to impress her and she asked me what the Ambassador thought about it. I said that I had not actually discussed the question of a reply with him, but I felt sure that he would agree that it would be undignified and would serve no useful purpose to stimulate further controversy in the press. The Empress then read me a letter from Mackenzie in which he undertook to be silent if her Majesty desired it. At the same time there were in the German document contentions injurious to his professional reputation if left unnoticed. He could dispose of these by an exact scientific exposition which would make the whole matter clear. He could show that it contained assertions which were false, and prove that Bergmann's handling had actually shortened the Emperor's life by perhaps a month. But he would forego making any defence if the Empress so desired. There was no one at hand who carried sufficient weight to give advice on this critical point, and the Empress was persuaded by one or two individuals of little judgment that refutation ought to be authorized. A letter had, in fact, actually been sent in this sense to Mackenzie, when the Ambassador, who took exactly the same view that I had urged, begged her to modify the decision, and a telegram was accordingly sent revoking the letter. Mackenzie must, however, have returned to the charge, for he eventually produced a book dealing with his experience of the case, which served no good purpose, and which was severely judged as a breach of medical etiquette by the faculty in England. A British medical friend of very clear and impartial judgment, who studied the documents at the time, told me that he considered, apart from the question of whether the premisses postulated were correct, the report of the German doctors to be a model of what such a medical statement should be, clear and complete, whereas the hysterical exposition of Mackenzie condemned itself.

A year or two later at Athens I saw Morell Mackenzie again. He was then travelling in a touring P. & O. in the Mediterranean and had all the ship's company at his feet.

On this occasion he told me a curious story. On the Emperor William's death he received a telegram from the Chancellor to the effect that if the Emperor Frederick did not return to Berlin he could not answer for the consequences. When on the homeward journey the Ministers joined the royal train the Chancellor talked to him for some time pleasantly enough, and said to him significantly: "You will understand that there was not in reality any necessity for bringing him back to Berlin." Mackenzie had never been able to reconcile these two opposing statements. I suggested that the second might simply have been a mode of conveying to him that he was to keep his own counsel about the first. He said that this might offer an explanation which he had not thought of before.

In all that has been recorded here I have advanced no opinion of my own, nor do I mean to do so. But it may be well in conclusion to sum up the points which seem clearly to emerge.

In the first place it was not the Crown Princess who was responsible for the original summons to Mackenzie. It was Bismarck's intervention which prevented the contemplated operation. Nevertheless the general public in Germany in 1887 and 1888 assumed that the selection of Mackenzie was due to the Crown Princess, and Bismarck, who knew the truth, did nothing to put public opinion right. It seems probable that once Mackenzie had been chosen and had given grounds to hope that the malady was not malignant the Crown Prince and Princess rested their faith exclusively on the medical authority who had justified this hope. Mackenzie unfortunately succeeded in antagonizing every one in Germany. There can be little doubt that if a similar situation had arisen in England and a German doctor had been given the latitude and the special privileges which he assumed it would have been resented there not less than Mackenzie's position was in Germany. Eventually in November, 1887, he recognized that the disease was malignant in character, but no medical bulletin announced this



until February, 1888. After the death of the Emperor Frederick, Mackenzie was violently attacked in a medical report prepared by the German doctors, in which the operation which they had originally intended to perform seems to have been minimized. As to its real nature, however, Bismarck's evidence leaves no doubt. Had Mackenzie remained silent he might have retained the sympathy of his fellow-countrymen at least. But after the publication of his book he was practically ostracized by the medical profession.

My four years at the Embassy now drew to an end, and I was not altogether sorry to leave. Under actual conditions the atmosphere of Berlin was far from sympathetic to me and, interesting as the moment of transition might be, I was better pleased to watch it from without. Unwittingly I found myself rapidly becoming a courtier, whereas nature had meant me for a Bohemian. Escape was therefore welcome, especially as I was going to the land of my dreams, and found myself already repeating with Rudel in eager anticipation,

“Dear pilgrim, art thou for the east indeed?”

Before proceeding to Athens I had two months' leave due to me, and these I spent at home, occupying myself with the biography which I had been asked to prepare, and which was completed and ready for the publisher before I returned to Berlin to take leave. While I was in London the private secretary at the Foreign Office offered to recommend me for the post of private secretary to the Governor-General of India, but as acceptance would apparently have entailed leaving the diplomatic service, I begged him not to do so. On this occasion I once more found myself in the company of Gladstone and Lowell at Holmbury. Bowen, the judge, was also there. I remember that the latter put a question to Lowell after dinner which it puzzled him to answer. How was it that the individual states of the American union had no power to override or annul a contract without reference

to the central Government, and yet were able to grant divorces and so annul the contract of marriage on their own account, according to local legislation ? Lowell could only say that so far as he was aware the point had never been raised. Some days afterwards I heard him deliver one of the most eloquent and finished speeches to which it had ever been my fortune to listen at a dinner given by the Incorporated Society of Authors to American men of letters. He spoke of the infinite charm that London had for him, of its immense vitality, of the low incessant voice of the great city, which reminded him of the palace built by David for Bathsheba, situated within the hearing of a hundred streams. As he caught it sitting in his room he felt as if he were listening to the roaring loom of time. There was also a visit to Lord Rosebery at Mentmore with Cecil Spring-Rice, who had acted as his assistant private secretary at the Foreign Office. After a brief visit to my relations in Cornwall I took leave at Endsleigh of Lady Ermytrude Malet, who had been infinitely kind and good to us all at Berlin, entering into the social life and interests of the staff with a charming tolerance.

During this visit to England I became involved in the only intrigue of which I have been consciously guilty in my life. It will be generally conceded that the case was one in which the end justified the means. While at the Foreign Office one day visiting my old department, W. B. Robertson, who was then in charge of it, showed me a correspondence about the old Protestant cemetery at Rome, in which are the graves of Keats and Severn. The Roman municipality proposed to suppress the cemetery altogether, opening up a new road across the area by the gate of St. Paul. They undertook to remove all the remains of those interred there and re-bury them elsewhere, offering also ample compensation. The other nations interested in the cemetery raised no objection and the Embassy had reported in favour of the project. There was no one who felt it a duty to protest, and the Foreign Office had concurred. This had happened



during Robertson's absence and he was very indignant. But official consent had already been signified at Rome and he thought nothing more could be done. I reflected and thought otherwise. Sir Edward Malet was going that night to Balmoral, and I suggested that he should speak to the Queen about it and enlist her sympathy. The next day, moreover, a letter and a note from well-known writers on the subject appeared in the press. The Queen took the matter up warmly and caused a letter to be addressed at once to Lord Salisbury, expressing her distress at learning of the proposal to disturb the grave of Keats and her hope that something would be done to prevent this. The result was a note to Rome in quite an opposite sense to that despatched some two months earlier, and Sir Edward on his return to Berlin was instructed to invite the co-operation of the German Government, on the grounds that the area in which to bury strangers and heretics had originally been conceded to the Prussian Minister, who represented the non-Catholic powers in Papal days. The new Emperor was about to visit Rome and on such an occasion nothing would be refused to him, while it would be much appreciated in England if he could contribute to save from desecration a spot which had been for years a place of pilgrimage for Englishmen. Herbert Bismarck accordingly spoke to the syndic, Marchese Guiccioli, who was most friendly, and it was arranged that although the project of the road across a section of the area could not be renounced, the actual ground where Keats and Severn lay should be railed off, surrounded with a little garden, and preserved. So much was gained, even if it had not proved possible to save the whole of that haunted ground under the Pyramid of Caius Cestius and the ancient wall, so beautiful in its abandonment and quietude, as "almost to make one in love with death." As a matter of fact the original scheme was not carried out at the time. It came up again for consideration more than once in later years when I was Ambassador in Rome, and, though circumstances made me almost despair of any finality in this

question of the old cemetery, in which I had thus found myself involved at the outset of my career, it was eventually settled, I hope for good, towards the close of my diplomatic life in Rome. At another time I was also concerned with saving the resting place of Shelley's ashes from interference. But that experience will be recorded in its proper place.

Just before my return to Berlin Professor Geffcken published in the *Deutsche Rundschau* a diary kept by the Emperor Frederick during the war of 1870-71, an extremely interesting document which maintained that both the Emperor William and Bismarck had felt some hesitation about the declaration of the Empire, and that it was the Crown Prince himself and the Grand Duke of Baden who had been most influential in overcoming those hesitations. In any case the Crown Prince wrote with the conviction that this was so. A curious note towards the end referred to a proposal of the Emperor Napoleon, made presumably at the moment of his surrender, that the terms to be imposed on France should be mitigated in return for co-operation in a Franco-German combination against Great Britain. The diary made it clear why the Emperor Frederick had not been popular with the "old Prussians." He was too little Prussian and too much German. The Junkers wanted a Prussian hegemony not an elevation of the whole Germanic stock by universal suffrage to an equal share in affairs of State. This diary Bismarck at once declared to be of doubtful authenticity, and when its apocryphal character proved to be no longer sustainable, he changed his tactics and Geffcken was arrested with a view to his trial for the betrayal of State secrets. Bail was refused him, though he was between sixty and seventy years of age, and he was only liberated after three months' detention, there being no case against him. In Busch's *Bismarck* the plot is fully revealed. He quotes Bismarck as saying "we must first treat it as a forgery, a point of view from which a good deal may be said. Then, when it is proved to be genuine by the production of the original, it can be dealt with further in another way."



Both the conspirators admit, however, the genuineness of the diary, which is spoken of as superficial and sentimental. I was fortunate enough to obtain a copy of the *Rundschau* before it was suppressed. When I first saw the Empress after my return on the 27th September she was much perplexed about this document of the existence of which she had not been aware, though she remembered the Crown Prince telling her about the Emperor Napoleon's proposal. Two days before he had started for the war he had given all his papers into her keeping, and there was a diary kept up to the last moment, the 23rd July, 1870. He recommenced his diary with the date of his return, March 17th, 1871. This proved that he had not taken the then existing diary with him. What had been published must therefore have been a separate record, which had never been shown to her, though matters contained in it had often been referred to in conversation.

I had left the transcript of my biography with the Empress to look over, and five days later I went back to Friedrichskron to recover it, and to take my final leave. She had now ascertained that she had actually had the war-diary in her hands, and had surrendered it to the Hausminister by mistake. There had been such masses of papers to go through, and among them was a bundle marked 70-71. It included some letters to A.D.C.'s, and having only glanced superficially into the bundle she had assumed that it contained only military notes and so had given it up. When she discovered her error she had asked to have it returned. But the Hausminister declined to restore it. She therefore wrote to say that having confided the documents to him and knowing him to be a man of honour, she was satisfied that they would be safely preserved in the family archives. She was extremely vexed at the report issued regarding the document for which the Chancellor was responsible. It was there stated that the Emperor William did not trust the Crown Prince, fearing that he might be guilty of an indiscretion to the "French-feeling Court of England." Such a statement

was manifestly absurd. There might have been partisans of France in the British Government, but you had only to read the Queen's diary to understand how untrue was such a charge against the Court. The insinuation thus made was an insult both to the Emperor Frederick and to herself. If the publication of the diary was a betrayal of State secrets, how much more was it a betrayal to inform the world that the Emperor William did not trust his son ?

How Geffcken obtained the diary has, I think, never been fully explained. He was in intimate relations with the Crown Prince, who had a high opinion of him. It is probable that when he was working on the history of this period, the diary was lent him to study, and that he took a copy of it.

A curious sidelight is thrown on the temperament of Bismarck by a conversation, which he had with our Ambassadors not long after the episode of the diary. It reveals even more strongly than his attempt to discredit its authenticity or than the imprisonment of Geffcken how intensely he resented the implication which it contained that any other but himself could have contributed to the structure of the German Empire or have assisted in overcoming the reluctance of the old King of Prussia to assume a new title. Bismarck had come to our Embassy to call, on the Queen's birthday. The Ambassador was out, but while leaving his card, on which he had written "God save the Queen," he learned that the Ambassadors was at home and he asked to see her. She came down not a little preoccupied at such an unusual occurrence as a visit from the Chancellor, who seldom paid such attention to ladies.

He began by repeating his congratulations on the anniversary and appeared to be in the genial humour which so well became him when he chose to display it. Then, quite suddenly, his manner changed, and his face assumed that angry and almost malignant look that boded storm, and he said that he had had something besides congratulatory messages to convey to the Ambassador. As the latter was not at home he would say it to her, and she would repeat his



words, "I want him to know," he said, speaking in English, "and I want your countrymen to know that it was I and only I who alone made this German empire. It was my sole work. And how do you think I accomplished this? How did I succeed in triumphing over every obstacle and in crushing every man who stood in my way?" He paused for an answer, repeating his question. Then, as he received no reply, he continued: "I will tell you. All this I achieved through—through—what is the word? It is a word the Irish often use; yes, through *cunning*. I set one man against another, and again and again I broke them. Well, there was a moment, after the Peace at Versailles, when I saw the work of my life crumbling before me after all my efforts. The King of Prussia refused to assume the position of German Emperor, and I was in despair. But once more my cunning stood me in good stead. I set one man against another. I told him that if he would not agree to my proposals there was another sovereign who would, and that I should address myself to the King of Bavaria. That settled the issue."

I do not pretend to quote precisely the words used, but the substance of them as here given is correct. We have ample experience of how much Bismarck accomplished by setting one nation against another. Here from his own lips was a frank confession that he had dealt with individuals as we know he did with nations. It is permissible to entertain some scepticism as to how far the venerable sovereign's decision could have been affected solely by the menace of a rival in the Bavarian king, who even in those days was well-known to be eccentric, if not abnormal, and whose candidature would hardly have been tolerated by Prussia or indeed by other German States. Were the facts not precisely as here related it might seem almost incredible that he should have chosen such an occasion to make such a disclosure. His jealous nature was evidently intensely excited by any suggestion of divided credit, and in his desire to repudiate any possibility that the Crown Prince could,

as he had claimed in his diary, have had any influence in modifying his father's decision, Bismarck was hardly capable of speaking without prejudice.

The Empress was leaving Friedrichskron on the following day. She had remained, she said, for nearly four months after her widowhood to show that she had no intention of running away from the attacks which had been so unfairly made upon her, and now she would never return there. She showed me the rooms in which the Emperor had lived, and took pleasure in pointing out to me all the familiar objects which had been dear to him, and once more she spoke of all they had hoped to accomplish. Of the German people and their essential characteristics she spoke with real affection and respect. And so I took my leave for a time. We were to meet again in Athens. It was significant that the name given to the Palace by the Emperor Frederick was suppressed, and the old name Neues Palais officially reimposed immediately after her departure.

I have dealt at considerable length with the events of this year, because indirectly they contributed not a little to the gradual deterioration of relations, which never again resumed a wholly confident and cordial character. From 1888 onwards an agitation unnatural and unjustified against Great Britain manifested itself in the German Empire and a series of ungracious and even unfriendly acts impeded the efforts of those who endeavoured to restore a better understanding.

I left Berlin on the 9th of October. My greatest regret was the parting with my chief, the kindest of men and the best of friends, who was like a father and a brother to his staff. I can never be sufficiently grateful to him for all that he did for me during the four years I served under him, and the many lessons he taught me in my profession. He was so modest and unostentatious that I often wonder whether justice was ever done to his really eminent services in steering our barque through the stormy waters at Berlin, as he continued to do for some seven years longer. Malet followed



himself the school of Lord Lyons, in which it was a maxim that when a diplomatist was not talked about it was an indication that he was doing his work well. So well did he do his work that he was little discussed or known by the outside world. He made no speeches and accorded no interviews. But the judgments which he formed and the advice which he gave to his government were very sound, and there were moments during his tenure of the Embassy when a temperament less calm, a perception less experienced of the opportune and a manner less discreet and imperturbable, might have aggravated an already delicate situation.

It seems therefore the more unfortunate that in the last hours before his retirement in 1895 he should have encountered an extremely disagreeable experience in making one last effort to do his duty to his country. The episode acquires significance in the light of after events and may therefore now be recorded as he told it to me.

He had arrived at the last days of his residence in Berlin. It had always been his frankly avowed intention to resign on reaching the age of sixty. He had had his farewell audience of the Emperor, which had been cordial, and he had presented his letter of recall. One last visit only remained for him to pay, to the Imperial Chancellor, Prince Hohenlohe. In the course of their final interview Malet said that he was giving up his post with a clear conscience. There were no outstanding questions and the horizon was fair. He therefore felt he could close his career at a favourable moment. There was indeed only one thing on his mind from which he foresaw any possible difficulties between the two countries in the near future, and now that he was no longer Ambassador and could speak unofficially as a private person he wanted to tell him as a friend about this one misgiving. He did not, he said, think that people in Germany fully realized how strong an opinion prevailed in Great Britain about the future of South Africa, and he felt he ought to tell him that this was a very genuine feeling which it would be imprudent to ignore. Malet did not at

the moment have any reason to suspect that the Chancellor had received this observation in any other spirit than that in which it had been made. In what particular form his words, conceived with the friendliest intentions, may have been passed on to the Emperor it is not possible to say. But they appear at any rate to have been received by the latter in a very different spirit. The Emperor spoke to the British Chargé d'Affaires in a tone of undisguised irritation of what he characterized as the language of menace which had been addressed to Germany by Sir Edward Malet, and public attention was drawn to the incident by the omission for the first time of the courtesy established by long precedent of sending an A.D.C. from the Palace to represent the Emperor at the station on the departure of an Ambassador. Such an omission was the more conspicuous in the case of a representative who had been for some twelve years in Berlin and had always enjoyed the best relations with the sovereign.

To those who remembered this incident the telegram to President Krüger some years later should not have come as a surprise.



## CHAPTER V

### ATHENS, 1888-1889

After a day or two at Vienna I embarked upon an Austrian Lloyd at Trieste for Patras. The perfect October weather in the Adriatic changed at Corfu, where I had my first glimpse of the Near East when a large number of Albanians and Montenegrins belted with daggers and pistols came on board as deck passengers. No friendly moon revealed the rugged mountains of Ithaca, which we passed at midnight, but the dawn cleared to unveil the Aetolian mountains, the shore of Missolonghi and the great rampart of Voidhia above Patras. The railway thence to Athens had only been opened some few months and was evidently regarded by the local population as a new toy. The village boys played hide-and-seek through the train in every station at which we stopped, and no one interfered with me as I sat on the step of the platform at the end of my carriage, drinking in the glorious views of the Corinthian gulf and identifying the peaks of Helicon and Parnassus on the further shore with a delight the memory of which still thrills me after thirty years. What a contrast was this *sans gêne* to the prohibitions and precisions of Germany, and how infinitely welcome! The high bastion of Acrocorinth, two or three Doric columns and a scattered village marked the site of the wealthy Sybaritic city. But the very name on the station board was an emotion; *non cuivis homini*! Thence we ran east past Megara along the coast, and reached Athens early in the afternoon. I was royally happy to be there. Among the many experiences of a crowded and interesting life I remember few like that of my first visit to the Acropolis

towards the sunset hour ; the revelation of the Parthenon, the outlook over Piræus to the sea, to Aegina's sapphire outline and Morea's hills ; the wonderful shadows of the clouds on Parnes, and the evening glow upon Hymettus. The delicate clearness of the air was exhilarating and half unconsciously I found myself repeating the exultant lines in the *Medea*

*Ερεχθεΐδαι τὸ παλαιὸν ὄλβιοι  
καὶ θεῶν παῖδες μακάρων—  
—ἀεὶ διὰ λαμπροτάτου  
βαίνοντες ἀβρῶς αἰθέρος.*

My new chief, Sir Edmund Monson, afterwards Ambassador in Paris, had been absent when I arrived, but returned a few days later. A scholar and a fellow of All Souls, he had an interesting record of diplomatic experiences, interrupted by a brief interlude of unfulfilled parliamentary ambition, which had not prevented his eventual return to the career. He had a very young family hardly consistent with the long grey beard which he affected at that time and which together with his benevolent smile had won for him at our court the appellation of the *Padre Eterno*. To him also I would record my gratitude for many lessons in my profession and for the constant indulgence and consideration which enabled me to see and study thoroughly the country in which I was posted. Monson had a very facile pen, and drafted despatches in the old diplomatic manner which were models of style, almost without a correction, a great contrast to my dear old friend Haggard the First Secretary of Legation, who although he had the family gift of expression and humour, used to present me with the most undecipherable mosaic of revisions and elisions to copy out for transmission to the Foreign Office. The typewriter and the assistant clerk were, of course, unknown in those days, and the juniors in the service had to perform all the mechanical duties.

Athens was preparing to celebrate the twenty-fift



anniversary of the accession of King George, and the hotels were crowded and extortionate. Objection was also raised to the presence of a black poodle of remarkable enterprise and intelligence which I had brought with me from Berlin. But I was fortunate in securing almost at once a little apartment not far from the eastern end of the Acropolis with windows looking to the temple of Olympian Zeus. Here I was joined very soon afterwards by Haggard (Sir William Doveton Haggard) and later still by the then attaché and now actual Minister at The Hague, Sir Charles Marling. We lived together comfortably and joyously in a house rented from a very competent chef who had married an English ladies' maid. We had established ourselves there only a few days before the Greek sovereign's jubilee, for which occasion the British Mediterranean Fleet came to the Piræus, under the command of the Duke of Edinburgh, on whose flagship, the *Alexandra*, the present King was serving as a lieutenant. The Duke was a guest at the Palace, but there was no room there for his flag-lieutenant, now Admiral Sir Colin Keppel, who found refuge in our new apartment. The night of their arrival he went early to bed, but Haggard and I were still sitting up towards midnight and consuming some Austrian beer, discovered in a neighbouring café, when we heard excited voices under the window, and knocks at the door. Looking out we saw a naval officer with two Greek policemen. To our consternation we found it to be the Commander-in-Chief, who had strolled out from the Palace at a late hour alone to look for his flag-lieutenant and give him instructions for the morning. He had lost his way, and how the Greek policemen, who could not understand him, had managed to conduct him to the house or to realize where we lived I have never been able to understand. He was, however, not in the least disconcerted, and waking up his flag-lieutenant sat down for a chat over our lager beer, after which we escorted him back to the Palace in safety.

The functions at Court which this anniversary entailed

offered a curious contrast to the rigid formality of those at Berlin. The first King of Greece and especially the energetic Queen Amélie had endeavoured to introduce a certain state and maintain an etiquette unsuited to the national temperament. This was no doubt among the reasons why it fell to the lot of my future chief, Lord Cromer, when he was an A.D.C. at Corfu, to have to interview at daybreak a dejected Bavarian prince in a white kilt, who had perforce exchanged a throne for a coil of rope on board the gun-brig *Hercules*.

A court ball at Athens was a novel and somewhat picturesque function. Not a few of the guests in those days wore the national costume, the white linen *fustanella*, really of Albanian origin, which is also worn by the light infantry, the corps of Efzones. The big master of the ceremonies, the magnificent Hadjipetros with his fierce white moustache, almost rivalled in importance the black moustached Perponcher of the White Hall at Berlin. In this extremely democratic, although thoroughly monarchical country, all sorts and conditions of men were invited to such ceremonies. A story was current that the German minister's coachman had informed him betimes that he would be unable to drive him to the Palace, because as *doyen* of the Athenian coachmen he had been invited himself. There was not much dancing, owing to the crowd. Supper, which was on a very liberal scale, was taken very seriously, and a certain number of the guests were evidently of opinion that it was not an occasion for altruism, for I saw bottles of champagne removed from the table and placed between their feet on the ground, to be reserved for the psychological moment, their hands being otherwise fully engaged.

Not even in Athens did I escape from the shadow of the tragedy in Berlin, and a most unpleasant episode disturbed my peace of mind during the first weeks after my arrival. The biography of the Emperor Frederick, with an introduction in the form of a long letter from the Empress, had been ready for publication before I left England. Translations into German and French were being prepared and



it was to be issued in November (1888). It was perhaps inevitable, when its appearance was publicly announced, that there should have been some anticipation of interesting revelations. As a matter of fact it had been compiled for the object in view from existing records, and contained little that was new. The utmost care had been exercised both by myself and by the Empress in supervising the manuscript to eliminate any reference which might lead to controversy, and I had confidently believed, after all the unseemly wrangles which had taken place, that it would have a good effect in Germany when it was seen that an Englishman, writing at the request of the Empress Frederick, could take quite a dispassionate view and say no hard word of anyone. But the unwarranted assumptions of the press were distinctly disquieting, and I therefore wrote to Count Bismarck to explain the origin of the book, and tell him that there was no justification for them.

To this letter I received no answer, but not many days before the date on which the biography was to appear a long telegram from Sir Edward Malet begged me to delay publication, and informed me that the new Emperor was very angry with me and maintained that it was an unheard of thing for a former member of our Embassy to have written about his father without having obtained the consent of the reigning sovereign. He had, therefore, evidently never heard of the matter. This was, of course, under existing circumstances quite conceivable. On the other hand, it would have been manifestly impossible for me to assume that he had not been told, and to have requested His Majesty's permission to carry out his mother's wishes in accordance with the encouragement and authority which I had received from home. While I for my part could to some extent understand the Emperor's attitude and possible preoccupation, I could hardly perhaps expect him to appreciate my dilemma. Being sincerely anxious that there should be no public knowledge or discussion of this unexpected development, I could not do otherwise than telegraph

to suspend publication and have copies of the book sent to Berlin. Malet was kindness itself, and took up the case on my behalf with his habitual tact and frankness. After having heard the Ambassador's explanations it appears that the Emperor only asked to see the book before it should be issued. A number of days, however, passed without any news from Berlin, and it was only when letters eventually arrived that I learned the reason. Finally I was informed that the issue need no longer be delayed, and so it appeared in London only one day after the date announced.

When letters reached me—it was a long post to Athens—they made it clear that the Bismarcks had been even more urgent in their opposition than the Emperor. Herbert Bismarck complained to the Ambassador that it contained (on p. 100) what was tantamount to an extract from the diary published by Geffcken which the Chancellor had pronounced apocryphal. Exception was also taken to the introductory note by the Empress, and to a quotation from "Julius Caesar" in eulogy of the late Emperor's nobility of character. It was further maintained that the Radical press would take advantage of the publication to make unfavourable comparisons between the late and the present Emperor, and that praise of the dead sovereign would inevitably suggest that the book was intended to serve party purposes. None of these observations seemed to call for serious comment except the first and to that a clear answer could be given. The book as printed had been completed some time before Geffcken published the diary and the incident which was alleged to have been derived from that source had come to my knowledge through our military attaché, who had learned the circumstances from the old Emperor William himself. Incidentally this constituted another proof of the authenticity of the diary.

The reigning Emperor, after seeing the book, in view of the direct association with its publication of the Empress Mother to which he objected, declined to give it his personal sanction, but withdrew any further objection to its appear-



ance. It was evident, however, that I had fallen from grace, and I received unmistakable evidence of that in the following year. The little volume had a very large sale, and was translated into Italian and Greek, as well as French and German. The result was a handsome contribution to the funds of the hospital for Diseases of the Throat, and I have no doubt the publisher also did well over it. The incident was an unpleasant one at the outset of a career. I had not sought for the task imposed upon me, but had carried it out to the best of my ability, and to judge from the reviews, with success in avoiding indiscretions. But we are perhaps more often punished for our virtues than our vices. The gratifying side of the incident was the cordial support which I received at home and the unfailing kindness of my old chief, who handled the matter in Berlin with the greatest discretion. Not long after my arrival in Athens I was promoted to be a Second Secretary. This rise of degree was purely mechanical, according to the vacancies which occurred in the regular order of seniority. It was consequently somewhat irritating to read paragraphs in the press announcing the step to be due to royal patronage consequent on the publication of the biography.

The *Surprise*, commanded by the popular Maurice Burke, who was later Captain of the ill-fated *Victoria* when she sank off the Syrian coast in collision with the *Camperdown*, brought the Duchess of Edinburgh to Athens. The Grand Duchess Serge of Russia was also staying at the Palace, and we were all under the charm of her extraordinary beauty as we were unanimous in disliking her supercilious husband, especially after a little episode which occurred on board the *Surprise*. The Commander was entertaining the Court at tea, and our Legation was also invited. The occasion was purely informal, but there was a band playing and after tea the guests began to dance. One of our secretaries who was talking to a lady of the Court was half-leaning against, half-sitting on a coil of rope. The deck was full of encumbrances which obstructed the view, and he did not notice

that the Queen of Greece had also begun to dance. The Grand Duke Serge at once sent an aide-de-camp to ask the secretary in question whether it was the custom in England to remain seated when the Queen had risen. The form of the message and the fact that it was conveyed on board a British ship made it doubly offensive.

In December, 1888, I was sent to Crete to carry new ciphers to our Consul at Canea and was instructed to keep my eyes open and report my observations. The little steamer from Piraeus touched at Sithnos and Melos. The Aegean was very boisterous, and wind and sea were so strong that we could not make the Canea roadstead and had to put in to Suda Bay. Thence I proceeded overland to the political capital of the island, with its pleasant suburb, Halepa, where the British Consul resided. That veteran of the east, Alfred Biliotti, was good enough to put me up. His father had been a consul of the Grand Duke of Tuscany in Asia Minor and had rendered valuable services to British subjects. After Tuscany was merged in the new Italy he was assimilated into the British consular service, and his son continued the tradition as a British subject. He had lived all his life in the east, and his conversation on the affairs and politics of the Levant was a liberal education. Biliotti suffered from somewhat pronounced deafness, but he never seemed to miss anything that was worth hearing. His last post had been at Trebizond. He told me that the Turks of Anatolia had at one time great hopes of the Egyptian Arabi, whom they regarded as a possible leader against a Giaour Armenian Sultan, and they resented his suppression by British forces. But generally they held to us, believing us to be antagonistic to the arch-enemy Russia. During the last Russo-Turkish war they were convinced (inspired no doubt by some echo of the Tyrtæan chorus popularized in the music-halls by the "great Macdermot," which enriched our vocabulary with the word *jingo*) that Great Britain was going to intervene. Hundreds and thousands came to the consulates seeking to enrol them-



selves as volunteers in our service. Then heads of districts and finally Caucasian princes followed with offers of men, offers which represented 400,000 ready fighters who were to be had for the asking. They wanted no pay, only a pound a month for the maintenance of their families. Such was the position of influence we once held in the Turkish empire, where Germany was before long to supplant us. Ghazi Moukhtar had, he maintained, been held back by orders from the Porte. Had he gone on he would have driven the Russians out of Turkey in Asia, and the whole Caucasus would have risen could the leaders have counted on the moral support of Great Britain. My diaries of this time are full of notes on the Cretan situation, which was the chief topic of interest in Hellenic politics and kept us constantly *en vedette*. But the involved story has lost much of its interest for twentieth century readers now that the annexation of Crete to Greece has long been an accomplished fact. The great Cretan who played so large a part in the liberation of the island from the Turkish yoke, and whose name dominates the history of Balkan developments in the last decade, had hardly been heard of then.

I made the acquaintance of the Vali, Sartinsky Pacha, an agreeable man who was bored to death in the labyrinth of Cretan intrigue, particularly at that moment when there was an acute crisis in local politics. He found it difficult to maintain his own position in view of the constant complaints regarding his administration addressed to Constantinople by whichever party was out of favour. An attempt had just been made to undermine his authority by a petition of the Conservative Mussulmans to the Sultan to order a disarmament of the Cretans, a measure unenforceable among a population whose arms are their special pride and to whom they were, moreover, indispensable for self defence seeing that the law offered no protection. It would have led to an immediate outbreak of revolution. The Christian Greek population was twice as numerous as the Mussulman, and far more intelligent and enterprising.

A modest charcoal burner from Halepa gave his nephew 1,500 francs and sent him to Germany to learn languages. He remained there eight years, adding to his modest resources by giving Greek lessons, learned German and English and ended as a professor in the University of Athens. Some countries have to enforce education. The Greeks demand and obtain it. With such a spirit in the majority, contrasting with the unprogressive indifference of the Turk, how could the islanders not aspire to be united to the mother country, and who could fail to sympathize with their aspiration ?

Like most of my countrymen I had a prejudicial liking for the Turk, who has the manly and sympathetic virtues. But then it had not been my lot in life to have to live under the indeterminate conditions of government for the sake of the governor. In Egypt old Ghazi Moukhtar, the Sultan's High Commissioner, a splendid fighting man with a somewhat restricted outlook, used to enlarge to me on the advantages of an immutable religion defined by the immutable text of the Koran. I did not dispute it, but reflected that it might account in a measure for the unprogressive immutability of the Turk himself. A nomad by origin, the Turk has retained certain characteristics of the wandering years when he would ride or march all day, and after his tent was pitched would sit down on the ground or carpet tired and content to merely rest. He had never acquired the habit of study or investigation, and so still when his day's business or official function is concluded he just sits playing with his string of amber beads, sits on and on, saying little and perhaps thinking even less. There are, of course, to-day numbers of progressive and highly cultivated Turks, and many intelligent and highly gifted Turkish ladies, through whose influence it is possible that a future movement of regeneration will be promoted, so that the immutable may after all be modified in time. I have only in view the average man of status as I knew him nearly forty years ago, when I found a stereoscope with pornographic photographs from Vienna to be the only available distraction in the



dwelling rooms of an important Konak. Such an amiable type with whom I made acquaintance was the patriarchal chief officer of Customs at Canea. The local director of the Eastern Telegraph Company enjoyed the privilege of importing free of duty into the island all that was required for the maintenance of cables and apparatus. Interpreting the rights thus conferred upon him in a liberal spirit, he informed the chief of Customs, when his annual consignment of whisky arrived, that the bottles contained spirit for the machine. "Ah yes, to be sure," said that benevolent official as he signed a free pass or entry; "spirits for your machines. But I also have a machine for which spirits are indispensable, and I shall reserve three bottles for my own machine."

The snow was gathering on Cretan Ida and the White mountains, and recent rains had made all the tracks into the interior impassable, at least so the Vali informed me, and I was, therefore, obliged to abandon a project of penetration and content myself with an expedition to the solitary monasteries in the rocky headland of Acrotiri, which closes in one side of Suda Bay. For this purpose the Vali offered me an escort of two Zaptiehs which I accepted, as conditions in the island were disturbed. If the last body brought in for identification had happened to wear a fez, it would be the turn of a hat wearer to pay the death penalty, and that might chance to be myself as well as any other, which the Vali would have found embarrassing.

The Monasteries of Akrotiri, Hagia Triadha and Hagios Joannes, dated from Venetian times and being practically fortresses were used by the inhabitants as places of refuge in times of revolution. A third, Katholiko, much more remote at the end of a wild gorge descending to the sea, had been abandoned, and the presence of this half-ruin seemed to emphasize the sense of solitude. A wonderful stalactite cave not far away was said to have sheltered the eponymous St. John of the monastery, who to judge from a fresco in the church was not identifiable with any of the Johns in the

hagiologies to me familiar. After a long day of exploration I returned to Hagia Triadha to sup and sleep. The pre-Christmas fast was being observed and the diet was strictly limited, but there was abundance of resinous wine. I have met fellow-countrymen in Greece who professed to like resinous wine, and have always suspected them of having been carried away by enthusiastic Philhellenism. The Greeks themselves have a way of saying *Bête comme un Philhellène*. But, as any wine is better than none, it is well to know that if this mixed product of the fir tree and the vine is retained for a certain time in the mouth and rolled round with the tongue, as the juice of the grape should always be, the strong taste of the resin disappears and that of the wine reasserts itself. The monks, who depended for their revenues on the care of their olive woods, were very jolly fellows. My Greek was as yet too strictly classical for much conversation. But I think they had but little to tell, in spite of the benevolent and sapient aspect which their long beards and flowing robes suggested.

After my return to Halepa I made an interesting acquaintance in Elpis Melena, as she was known in literature, whose real name was Marie Espérance Von Schwarz. She had come as an ardent sympathizer to nurse during the Cretan rebellion of 1866-67, and had remained in the island ever since. She claimed to be of English birth, but her maiden name was Brandt. Born in 1818 she had married at sixteen and was left a widow at seventeen. She had lived long in Rome, where, in spite of our widely differing ages, we found that we had still some mutual friends. The moving influence in her life had been her devotion to Liszt and to Garibaldi. Revolutionary by instinct, a poetess, an archaeologist and a writer of much cultivation, she was now devoting her latter years to the protection of animals, to the collection of her Cretan memories, which were published a year or two later,<sup>1</sup> and to benevolences to her innumerable godchildren.

<sup>1</sup> *Erlebnisse und Beobachtungen eines mehr als 20 jährigen Aufenthaltes auf Kreta*. Elpis Melena, 1892.



The relation of godparent and godchild in Greece is very close and intimate, constituting a bond as strong or stronger than that of blood. Not a little of the undoubted ascendancy exercised over his people by the present King of Greece, in spite of many mistakes, is due to the fact that during his Balkan wars he undertook to be *Kumbaros* to all the children of the soldiers in his army born during the campaign. Elpis Melena lived on till 1899. Visitors to Crete were rare in those days, and there are probably few people in England who have even heard of, and fewer still who knew, that solitary link with the past. She had a great deal to tell of Crete and the Cretans. But it was her long and intimate association with Garibaldi which interested me most of all. Much of its story is contained in her books,<sup>1</sup> in which there are a number of the liberator's letters to *Speranza carissima e amatissima*. But she also recalled adventures which do not there appear.

I cannot, of course, vouch for the accuracy of the stories which she told me at Canea, nor have I any means of knowing how intimate their relations really were. But Garibaldi's own letters to her lend probability to her assurance that he had at one time desired to marry her. After Aspromonte where in 1862 he was wounded and taken prisoner, when he had fallen into a critical condition for want of proper care and nourishment, she had nursed him and cooked for him. She also told me that she had for a time adopted his illegitimate daughter Annita, the child of Battistina. Annita was growing up into a beautiful woman, when she died somewhat mysteriously, at sixteen. But she had a wayward, ungovernable nature, was turbulent, even violent and lacking in gratitude. She would have given her father much trouble had she lived. Elpis Melena's regard for the memory of the liberator was tempered by some criticism. It was perhaps a feminine sense of resentment at his apparent unconcern in a case in which his service came near to costing

<sup>1</sup> An English edition of her Recollections of the public and private life of Garibaldi was published in 1887.

her life, that inspired her reflections upon his indifference as to the fate of his own adherents and agents.

She had been entrusted by him with the carriage to Messina of some very compromising letters at the time of the arrest of Monti and Tanetti. These letters contained notices for publication announcing that, if the prisoners were executed, two priests would be killed in every Italian city. She was herself arrested at Leghorn on board the ship on which she was to travel. A woman was instructed to search her in her cabin, while five *sbirri* stood on guard outside the not quite closed door. The letters were found upon her. She could not speak, as the slightest whisper would have been overheard, and she could only show the woman a big bank note and put her finger on her mouth. Impatient voices outside urged the searcher to hurry, but she responded to the mutely eloquent appeal. The letters had just been inserted between the mattress and the side of the berth when the door was pushed open. "Niente!" exclaimed the searcher, and Elpis Melena was then removed from the ship and released. Later she sent to recover the letters. But the captain had already destroyed them without examining the contents. He did not wish to be detained or have any scandal on board his ship. And yet when she next saw Garibaldi, after her narrow escape from this desperate situation, his only observation was: "We thought that you were dead. Well you deserve the red shirt." It may be that in his eyes there was no higher praise than this, but it could hardly satisfy the eternal feminine in one who had risked her life in his service.

She also told me how on another occasion she had concealed in the house where she lived at San Giuliano a young adherent of Garibaldi, a mere boy of eighteen who had been condemned to death. She had made arrangements with a Captain Lewis, the skipper of an English barque, which was lying off the coast, to get him safely out of the country. All was ready, but before he could be got on board the police came to search her house. She was looking out of the first



floor window, when they saw her, and summoned her to open or they would break down the door. She had just time to tell the young man to race to the upper floor. She would take the officers into her rooms on the lower one, and when he heard the door bang he was to rush down and out by a back way, where they had not posted anyone. The search of her apartment took just long enough to enable him, to get clear, and by the time they went upstairs he was well on his way to the sea and safety. She complained that Garibaldi showed but little interest in the fate of the boy. His attitude was that every one should be glad to die for the cause.

I was fortunate enough to be able in return for Biliotti's great hospitality to render him a little service. The story is interesting as illustrating how our consular officers were treated by the subordinate guardians of the public purse in those days. He had not long before been instructed to make a tour round the island, and report on the conditions which appeared to menace an early outbreak. Now there were hardly any roads in the island, and no inns. The only way to carry out his instructions was to hire horses and pack-mules and carry a tent with him in which to sleep. On his return he represented that the exceptional circumstances had made it quite impossible to keep his expenditure within the regulation allowance of one pound a day sanctioned for consuls travelling in the public service, and he asked to be authorized to charge his actual out-of-pocket expenses. In reply he received a communication to the effect that it was fully recognized that under existing conditions the regulation allowance of one pound had been inadequate, and he was consequently authorized to charge for the day of his departure as well as the day of his return! His salary was a very modest one and the loss entailed was a serious matter for him, but he had not liked to protest against a ruling which came to him with all the circumstance of official forms. When I again reached Athens I put the matter before Sir Edmund Monson, who wrote indignantly to the

highest authority, with the result that Biliotti received a cheque which liberally covered all his expenses.

I picked up enough information in Crete to prepare a report for the Minister and spent a perfect Christmas eve and morning crossing the Aegean. Athens I continued to like more and more. Haggard and I used to take long rides over the country in the afternoons. He was the best of company and a splendid travelling companion with high spirits and a very daring humour. I shall never forget an occasion on which we accompanied to the Acropolis a most amiable but not classically interested lady, whose husband's business had brought him to Athens. As we approached the masterpiece of Iktinus she inquired: "Is that the Parthian?" "Yes," said Haggard, "that is indeed the Parthian, and those fallen columns to the right and left are the well-known Parthian Shafts."

Echoes from Berlin continued to reach me. During his brief reign of three months the Emperor Frederick had parted with only one Minister, the favourite of the Junkers, Puttkamer, who had resigned upon receiving a message insisting on the necessity for ensuring greater freedom in elections, before the royal signature could be put to a measure extending the legislature period of the Prussian Landtag to five years. Within six months of his death Puttkamer received the order of the Black Eagle, the highest, rarest, most coveted of all German decorations. Then came a monstrous inspired attack on Sir Robert Morier in the *Cologne Gazette*. His indignant letter to Count Bismarck protesting against the charge that Marshal Bazaine had through him obtained knowledge of the whereabouts of Prince Frederick Charles' army, and his demand that an official *démenti* should be published, received a reply to the effect that the tone of Morier's letter was not of a nature to induce Count Herbert to depart from his official attitude to the press. The attitude of the Bismarcks to the press was surely a little too notorious for such an unblushing rejoinder. The motive of the attack must have been to



compromise Morier's position in Russia. If so, it showed grave miscalculation, for it strengthened it immensely. The old hand on the wheel of public affairs seemed to have grown less sure. A similar official attack in Germany on the Austrian Minister, Count Taaffe, whose majority was crumbling, had reseated him more firmly than ever in office, and it may be doubted whether in France the rather second-class personality of Boulanger would ever have loomed so large if Germany had not made a bugbear of him.

The anemones were already starring the grass and the young corn was rising high when I was invited by my friend Herbert Gibbs and the Greek banker Ionides to join their party on a steamer which they had hired to visit several points of special interest in Greece. That entirely delightful expedition, which was not without a certain spice of adventure, remains a vivid memory, for it brought the realization of a cherished desire to visit sites which had been so long familiar in dreams. Among these were Chalcis and the bay of Aulis where Gibbs, Haggard and I came near to sharing the fate of Aristotle in the churning race below the narrow tidal strait of the Euripus, owing to the breaking of an oar in an overcrowded boat over which the seas broke, but which happily still contrived to float when waterlogged. We explored Thermopylae; the Valley of Tempe; Delos, a red island of poppies in the intense blue sea, and lastly Nauplia, whence I returned to Athens. It was still considered desirable in those days to send an escort of cavalry with our party across the Thessalian plain to the passage between Ossa and Olympus. Even so early in the year the heat was intense in the treeless corn lands, and when at last the mountains opened to receive us in the beautiful gorge with its shady groves of plane under the grey cliffs which wall in the passage of the Peneus to the sea, I understood the enthusiasm which the vale of Tempe aroused in the traveller of ancient days.

A hasty visit to Italy, where I joined my family for a few weeks in the spring, brought me into contact at Venice with

John Addington Symonds, who was then writing his new Italian sketches. All one long night till dawn appeared I sat up with him and Horatio Brown, wrestling in genial argument, wetted by potations of a white wine from the Veronese. I remember at the end I reproached him with the iconoclastic spirit in which he had undermined many of my ideals, and found the antidote in his answer, which besought me not to take it to heart, for if I had elected to be the devil's advocate, he would certainly have been found defending the position which I had been trying to hold. It was only a genial exercise of dialectics. Symonds was already a doomed man, and only descended in the spring for a few months from his sanatorium at Davos. We met again in Rome, and to Rome he came at last to die, though not then anticipating the end. He lies a few yards away from the graves of Shelley and Trelawney under the Aurelian wall among the cypresses of Testaccio.

The later summer in Athens was desperately hot. The rocky heights which surrounded the city and the parched earth absorbed the fierce sun all day long and radiated at night the heat they had accumulated. When it grew intolerable Marling and I joined the Russian First Secretary Bakmeteff and his American wife, most sociable and hospitable of colleagues, and camped in the monastery of Mendhéli, half-way up the slopes of Pentelicon. The monks, who were not many in number, gave us a certain number of rooms. We took our beds there, some stores and live stock, and the Bakmeteffs brought their cook. Bakmeteff had been at Oxford, at Merton, with my old friend Mowbray Morris the "man of letters," and many were the tales which his contemporaries told of the eccentricities and adventures of "the Russ." His knowledge of both French and English literature was, like Sam Weller's knowledge of London, "extensive and peculiar," and he had a delightful little antiquarian library of books. One of his possessions which I really envied was an Elizabethan vocabulary for travellers in Italy, *The Italian Schoolemaister*, printed at



*London by Thomas Purfoot in the year of grace 1597, by Claudius Holliband, gentl. of Bourbonnois.* The phrases for interpretation gave a curiously vivid picture of the habit of life of the time. My old colleague, who was Russian Ambassador at Washington when the Great War began, rather, I think, enjoyed and courted the sort of Machiavellian reputation attributed to Russian representatives in those days. He was an acute observer who concealed a warm heart behind a caustic humour and a genial cynicism which made him excellent company. Marling and I took it in turns to spend two days and a night in Athens to carry on the duties which required personal attendance, and then enjoyed two nights and a day on the mountain. At day-break a donkey took us over the hills to the nearest station on the Athens line. Not far from the monastery there was a little spring which discharged a constant small stream into a rough basin hollowed in the marble, and the header into the ice-cold water on returning from the city washed the weariness of the sultry road away. It was also not a very long climb from our monastic retreat to the summit of Pentelicon. And there on nights of full moon we would sleep on the heather, very near the stars, and wake to see the sun come up out of the Aegean, revealing island after island to the east, till at last he overtopped the highlands of Euboea and struck the crescent plain of Marathon.

That summer my old Balliol friend, Malcolm Macmillan, spent a few hours with us at Athens, promising to return, and then went on to Constantinople. With Hardinge (Sir Arthur Hardinge, afterwards Ambassador at Madrid) he crossed to Broussa and made the ascent of the Asiatic Olympus. The mountain has two summits not very far apart. Hardinge went straight on to the higher point, while Macmillan, who wished to see the view from the lower one also, undertook to follow him after a brief interval. Hardinge had seen Macmillan below and waved to him to come on. After waiting a considerable time, as Macmillan did not appear, he returned to the point where they had left their

horses, and found no trace of him there. From that time he was never heard of in the world again. Hardinge, who no doubt took a very grave risk in doing so, remained all night on the mountain, sending their servant back to Broussa for assistance. A hue and cry was raised, rewards were offered, and several hundred men searched the mountain in every direction. Yet no trace or clue was ever found. He had hardly been out of earshot of the others and was actually seen descending from the crest which he had scaled. Not long afterwards a story reached me from Zante that a Greek who had been for a short time received in a Catholic monastery there, professed to have been on the mountain as a guide with another party and to have heard some Dalmatian shepherds, whose language he understood, discussing whether they should do to the other travellers as they had done to the Englishman. But the man in question proved to be an untrustworthy subject and was soon turned out of the monastery, so that little weight was attached to his statement. There was in Malcolm Macmillan, together with a curious individuality of mind, a strain at times of something more than eccentricity, and for a while I was tempted to believe we might hear of him again one day. "In Vishnu-land what Avatar?" But the enigma of his mysterious disappearance has never been cleared up.

The trouble which had been brewing in Crete at the end of 1888 came to a head in the spring and early summer of the following year. The dominant factions at the moment, demanding specific reforms and the recall of the Governor, had constituted a sort of general assembly, independent of the elected chamber, at Boutzunaria, the historic centre at which all Cretan insurrections had been organized. The Sultan sent a special commissioner to inquire into alleged grievances, but on his recommending concession he was forthwith recalled. It was to the interest of at least one Great Power that a settlement should not ensue in the island. Open insurrection would require the despatch of forty to fifty thousand troops, which would manifestly weaken



Turkish military power. The Cretan Christians made a fatal mistake at this moment in putting forward the plea for annexation to Greece. Until then they had had a large number of the Mussulman population with them in demanding reforms. But now the Mussulman elements began to draw away from the Christian group with which they had been politically associated, and to flock into the towns. The opposing forces gathered in large numbers at Boutzunaria. The garrison of Crete, consisting nominally of 10,000 men, was really only 4,000 strong and the Vali demanded reinforcements. The Porte postponed action and only armed the Mussulman population under the pretext of forming a gendarmerie, and so gradually gave the party which held the towns the upper hand. Refugees began to arrive in hundreds and thousands in sailing boats at Greek ports, and the country was hard put to it to provide for this extra population whose property had been confiscated on their departure. Such was in a few words the process which led to this as to many antecedent movements in Crete. Early in August the Greek Government, distracted with the problem of feeding, housing and clothing thousands of refugees, announced their intention of sending the whole of their fleet to Crete in order to force the Sultan to take action. But before doing so they appealed to the Great Powers to intervene and compel the Turks to do their duty. When at length considerable Turkish forces were despatched to Crete the pacification of the island was rapid and the Greek attitude then became one of protest against the severity of repression and of a demand for general amnesty. The situation thus developed offered a splendid opportunity to the politician to exhaust the vocabulary of patriotic fervour and the opposition renewed their efforts to undermine the position of the greatest statesman that Greece had hitherto produced.

Charilaos Tricoupis, son of the historian and statesman, Spiridion Tricoupis, who had been many years Hellenic envoy in London, had passed a great portion of his youth in

England and made his studies there, being also attached to the Legation when barely of age. He was so impregnated with British ideals and standpoints that he became known to his countrymen as the Englishman. He was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs at the age of thirty-four and Prime Minister some ten years later. A man of wide culture, frank, direct and rigidly incorruptible, but very ambitious for his country, he had now succeeded with certain intervals in dominating for an unprecedented period the political life of a people whose ancestral tradition it was to tire of hearing Aristides called *The Just*. Tricoupis would have played a conspicuous part in any country. In the smaller Greece of those days he was almost too big for his stage. His reputation stood as high in the councils of Europe as that of Venizelos in the councils of the allies during the Great War. He had already greatly improved the financial stability of his country by his dexterous handling of public resources, although he had not been able, as he had confidently hoped, to restore Greek currency to its par value. He improved harbours, extended roads and built railways. He assured a rigorous and impartial collection of revenue, and made the Greek fleet an important and progressive factor.

His private life was simple and almost austere in the modest house which his devoted sister, Miss Sophie Tricoupis, managed for him, performing the functions of an extremely competent and accomplished private secretary, who interviewed both the important and the importunate, and spared his overtaxed energies in every possible way. Miss Sophie was indeed almost as great a power as her brother, who although he commanded respect, could never achieve popularity. To me Tricoupis, whom his countrymen regarded as unplastic and reserved, seemed endowed with infinite charm, and I was honoured in being admitted to his cordial friendship. With Miss Sophie, who survived her illustrious brother many years, I maintained a desultory correspondence until her death. The great difficulty for a man of his character lay in the narrow majority on which a Minister had



to count in a numerically small assembly, and the price which deputies exacted for their support in advancing the claims of their constituents. It was difficult to maintain the high standard of political integrity and equity at which he aimed when the defection of a dozen representatives might wreck the prospect of important issues, and there was no second chamber to redress the balance. He was now involved in a dispute vicariously of interest to us also, with the French Legation, which was characteristic of Tricoupis, and typical of international methods in the Balkans.

In pursuance of his policy of railway extension Tricoupis had invited tenders for the construction of a railway from Athens to Larissa in Thessaly. The supervision and execution of public works in Greece was at the time entrusted to a delegation of French engineers from the department of Ponts et Chaussées, who regarded all contracts in which they were concerned as a French monopoly and had made sure of securing this one for French enterprise. But the lowest tender submitted for the work was that of a British firm, whose terms, some twenty per cent. more advantageous than the lowest French offer, were accepted. The French Minister did not conceal his indignation. It is possible that, as he was one of those who though bearing a title of imperial nobility remained in the service of the republic, he felt obliged to be ultra-zealous. The old Marquis de Montholon had staunchly stood by Louis Napoleon in his early days and had shared his exile in England. His marriage there, *en secondes noces*, at the age of seventy to a beautiful Irish girl had been the subject of considerable comment. Her son, the Comte de Montholon, who was thus Irish on his mother's side, was Minister at Athens. He endeavoured to secure the revocation of the railway concession on technical grounds. When this failed the French engineering mission sent in their collective resignation, on the plea that the country which they served had been slighted. Tricoupis pointed out that the country in which they were serving was Greece, and his irritation was considerable when they

asked for the annulment of their ill-advised letter, which they admitted had been dictated by Montholon. He allowed the letter to be considered as *non-avenue*, but he spoke to Montholon with his usual directness, asserting the right of Greece to conduct her own business and inquiring whether he supposed that the British Legation had ventured to intervene in a similar manner.

In September I paid a visit to Euboea, where I was most kindly entertained by Mr. Noel at Achmetagha, his estate in that beautiful island, acquired by his ancestor who had been attracted by the association of his kinsman, Lord Byron, with Greece. Euboea had an interesting history in the middle ages, after the fourth crusade and its conquest by Jacques d'Avesnes, when it was divided into three feudal baronies, or Triarchies, assigned by Boniface of Montferrat, the King of Salonica, to three of his followers belonging to the family of Dalle Carceri of Verona. Later it fell under Venetian influence and Chalcis made an heroic but vain resistance to Mohammed the Great. The castle on the little island which further contracts the narrow strait of Negripont, with a marble lion of St. Mark that had survived the Turkish occupation, had not then been dismantled, and the splendid walls of Chalcis recalled the memorable siege. I was able during this visit to add considerably to the collection of Greek folk-lore and legend which I had begun to assemble, and which was eventually published in a volume "*Customs and Lore of Modern Greece*," now long out of print, though it achieved the dignity of a second edition. This book afterwards led to a correspondence with Mr. Gladstone as to whether Charos, the messenger of death in modern Greek legend, could like other existing survivals of ancient myth have been pre-Homeric, in spite of the fact that Charon, his ancient counterpart, is not mentioned in Homer. Mr. Gladstone wrote: "That he is not mentioned in Homer would not in my view militate against his being older than Homer. I think it is highly probable that there were many myths or traditions in the country which he may



have known but has not noticed. My own idea is that there were traditions of the old nature-worship which he did his best to put into the shade. Homer has Hermes, the Psychopompos, to perform *mutatis mutandis* what became the office of Charon. So that I should suppose it doubtful, mainly on account of this office of Hermes, whether Charon was pre-Homeric."

In the following month took place at Athens the marriage of Prince Constantine, the present King of Greece, to Princess Sophie, the third daughter of the Emperor Frederick. There was a great assembly of Royal relations for the occasion. A sincere disappointment to the Greeks was the absence of a popular favourite, Princess Alexandra of Greece, who had recently been married to the Russian Grand Duke Paul. Her absence gave rise to rumours of tension with Russia over the Cretan question. Intemperate comments had indeed not been lacking in a constitutionally intemperate press. But the presence of the Czarevitch seemed hardly consistent with any intention to emphasize displeasure with Greece. In spite of the depression which recent events in Crete had produced, the wedding festivities passed off brilliantly. The Prince and Princess of Wales arrived with all their family in the *Osborne*, escorted by the Mediterranean Squadron. The German Emperor, accompanied by the Empress, entered Piraeus in the royal yacht with a British Admiral's flag alongside the German. The salutes of the British, German, Italian and Russian warships made the scene in the Bay of Salamis like an old-world naval battle at close quarters. The Empress Frederick had already arrived with her daughters, attended by my old friends Seckendorff and Reischach, and the King and Queen of Denmark had also joined the family party. It was noticed at the Athens station that the German Emperor spoke cordially to the Austro-Hungarian, British and Italian Ministers, but only bowed to the French and the Russian. The marriage ceremony, which took place on October the 27th with all the elaborate ritual of the Orthodox Church, was

imposing but very long. Bride and bridegroom stood in front of the screen for upwards of an hour without swerving, while the wedding crowns were held over their heads by the Czarevitch, Prince Albert Victor and Prince George of Wales, Prince Henry of Prussia and the two brothers of the bridegroom in turns. In the evening we dined at the Palace. Herbert Bismarck, who had accompanied the Emperor, was to my surprise extremely cordial when we met. On the other hand the Emperor, moving after dinner among the foreign representatives, passed by me with a frown upon his face. I did not on that occasion emulate the example of Beau Brummel. I learned, however, from the Prince of Wales that he was still gravely offended about the book.

The Prince was to start on the following day for Egypt. Prince Albert Victor was about to visit India. The *Osborne* would take him to Port Said, where he would embark on board the *Oceania*, and after seeing him off the Prince of Wales was to return to Alexandria and pay a visit to Cairo. To my delight he invited me to accompany him. There had been considerable difficulties regarding the position of the very numerous Greek colony in Egypt, and it was suggested that I, being well posted in these questions, should take the opportunity of discussing them directly with the Egyptian Ministers and Sir Evelyn Baring.



## CHAPTER VI

### ATHENS, 1889-1890

There was little time to prepare, as we sailed at noon on the 28th. The Empress Frederick and the Princess of Wales remained on board the *Osborne* till we drew abreast of Salamis, when they were transferred to the *Dreadnought*. Prince George of Wales was now a lieutenant in the *Osborne*, which was commanded by Captain Hedworth Lambton (Admiral Sir H. Meux). Lord Suffield and General Arthur Ellis were in attendance and Captain Holford was accompanying Prince Albert Victor to India. Already at dinner we had the fiddles on the table, and though the sea quieted down between Melos and Crete and the next morning opened fair, the wind increased in force all through the afternoon. It blew very hard all night and grew worse the following day. Heavy seas were shipped which did considerable damage, washing out the cook's galley, smashing the bulwarks and carrying away the port light.

It was imperative not to miss the *Oceania* at Port Said and every effort was made to force an additional half-knot out of the old *Osborne*. The Prince of Wales was an excellent sailor, but he nevertheless wisely remained in his cabin as any movement was difficult, and the one or two survivors among us took our meals in the wardroom. Instead of getting in with daylight as anticipated we did not make Port Said until 10 p.m. on the 30th, and there were very few tons of coal left in the bunkers. But the *Oceania* had after all not yet arrived. In view of the heavy weather the run back to Alexandria was abandoned and it was decided that we should proceed on the following morning through

the Canal to Ismailia. This involved a rapid modification of the reception programme in Egypt, which was arranged without any apparent hitch. In the early morning the *Oceania* came in, having lain off the entrance to the Canal all night.

Sir Evelyn Baring joined us at Port Said, and thus I met for the first time the great proconsul with whom I was later to be associated for so many years. The Prince had described him as a very able man, but with no manners. I could not feel this judgment to be altogether justified, and was immediately attracted to him. It is true that he did not suffer bores or fools gladly, and he never wasted valuable time on the unessential. There will be much to say about this great man in the proper place, if I am able to complete this record of my official life. But as I have recently read, in a book conceived in a brilliantly iconoclastic vein which has justly attracted much attention, an appreciation which suggests that he only regarded Egypt as a promising field for the advancement of Sir Evelyn Baring, I wish to say at once that having lived in the closest relations with him for eight years of my life I consider such a judgment as altogether distorted. His every energy was disinterestedly and whole-heartedly concentrated on the work in hand for that work's sake only, and he had never any other end in view. So strong a personality could not fail to impress itself on everything it touched. But to insinuate that his action was prompted by egotistical motives reveals an entire misconception of his high and public-spirited character.

After an early coaling we entered the canal and reached Ismailia towards sunset. The *Oceania* passed at 8 p.m. and took Prince Albert Victor on board. Starting early by train the following morning we found that in spite of the change of route the stations had been decorated. After a brief halt at Tel el Kebir and a visit to the military cemetery, we arrived at Cairo in time for lunch at the Agency. Cairo had not yet become a semi-European city in 1889. The wonderful crowd which lined the streets costumed in many



colours was a revelation of the real East. After lunch the formal visit to the Khedive Tewfik Pasha took place at the Abdeen Palace. I had heard much of him from Malet, of whom I found he retained a friendly and grateful recollection. Tewfik was a thoroughly amiable and good man with all the domestic virtues. By some perversity of fate it appears to be always the domestic and kindly rulers that are confronted with revolutionary movements. The Prince of Wales and his staff were lodged at Ghizeh across the Nile in the house of Prince Hussein, who was twenty-five years later to be the first Sultan of Egypt. In the evening we dined at the Abdeen Palace, and sitting next to Tigrane Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I had an opportunity of discussing with him the various questions for which I had been instructed to seek a solution. There was a review on the following day in which some 1,700 British and 4,000 Egyptian troops took part. The Prince rode out and saluted the Khedive with a royal salute which gave the assembled crowds great pleasure. There was nothing but amity and goodwill in Egypt in those days. A strictly limited number of carefully selected British officials were acting as advisers or assistants in the various departments, and were careful to maintain only this advisory character. Their influence was rapidly making itself felt, and they were almost worshipped by the fellaheen whose rights and obligations had now been clearly defined. Our occupation was felt to be merely temporary, and confirmation had been given to our repeated declarations to that effect by the recent Drummond-Wolff Convention, fixing a definite date for the withdrawal of British troops. It is true that at the last moment the Sultan had been induced by French pressure at Constantinople to withhold his signature on account of the clause stipulating for our return if anarchy should again supervene. But the terms of the Convention left no doubt as to our intentions.

Sunday was devoted after a luncheon party at the residence of the Sirdar, General Sir Francis Grenfell (now Field-

Marshal Lord Grenfell) to the Museum, which was still at Boulak, though the precious collections were in process of removal to Ghizeh, whence they have since been brought to the new building specially constructed to receive them adjoining Kasr-el-Nil. We dined with the Prime Minister Riaz Pasha, and at his table I was again able to discuss Greco-Egyptian issues with Sir Elwin Palmer, who had lately succeeded Sir Edgar Vincent as financial adviser. The next day we drove to the Pyramids along the road constructed little more than twenty years earlier for the opening of the Suez Canal, on which occasion the Emperor Napoleon III and the Crown Prince Frederick had found themselves together. Two years afterwards they were to meet again—at Sedan. The avenues then planted had already assumed stately proportions. The Sheikhs of the neighbouring villages had assembled and Bedawin gave an exhibition of their prowess on horseback. The high water of the Nile was still flooding the basins, and on our return we saw from the Pyramid road a sight which will never be seen again in that region now that perennial irrigation has been introduced. Some acres of the flooded area gleamed white like fresh snow in the sun, and as we drew nearer, I realized from its moving surface and the occasional lifting of wings that the effect was due to a vast assemblage of pelicans. In the evening after dining once more with the Khedive we attended the festival of tents in honour of the Prophet's birthday, the Mouled-el-Nebbi. Hundreds of tents with many-coloured hangings, divans and rare carpets, illuminated by strings of lanterns and sparkling clusters of chandeliers, covered a large open space adjoining the city. There were groups of devout men at prayer and Dervishes swaying their bodies to the monotonous cry of Allah, whose fervour seemed to make the display of fireworks in the central space before the tents of the mighty a little incongruous. It was a brilliant finale to the Egyptian visit. We embarked at Alexandria at noon the next day, and meeting a somewhat kindlier sea reached Piræus on the 7th. I had been able in certain respects to



fulfil the objects of my mission and to obtain assurances of good-will from the Egyptian authorities regarding some matters to which the Greeks attached importance.

The German Emperor and his suite had in the meanwhile left for Constantinople. It was after this visit that the German influence in Turkey, which ended in complete ascendancy, first began to make itself felt. No effort was omitted to attract the personal sympathies of Abdul Hamid who was then still master of the situation, nor did the subsequent Armenian massacres for a moment interrupt the constant exchange of compliments. The Germans were studious not to irritate him by demanding reforms and urging the grievances of subject populations. A travelling Member of Parliament of my acquaintance had an opportunity about that time of glancing over a private diary kept by the Sultan's physician who enjoyed his particular confidence. There was an entry in it to the effect that Abdul Hamid had said to him that of all the representatives accredited to his court he disliked the British most. They never took the slightest interest in his dynasty, but were always bothering him about the state of the people.

The Empress Frederick remained some weeks longer and I accompanied her to Eleusis, Argos, Mycenae, Tyrrins and Epidaurus. Dörpfeldt, the director of the German archaeological school at Athens, who had assisted Schliemann in his excavations, was with us and was most enlightening. Neither the Emperor nor his staff, who were reported to have been indiscreet in some of their observations at Athens, had appealed to the democratic Greek, and the visit to Constantinople, following on the visit to Athens, was not appreciated. But the mother of the new Crown Princess, whose story had excited general sympathy, was received with great enthusiasm in every Greek village and she seemed to enjoy the new experience of popularity. We went on to Olympia, still with Dörpfeldt as guide, and at Pyrgos we parted, the Empress embarking for Italy, while Dörpfeldt

and I drove across Elis through the night to catch a train for Patras at Lechana.

A curious adventure befell us on the road. Our carriage halted about midnight in a village called Gastouni to breathe the horses. We got out to stretch our legs, and hearing sounds of revelry by night went to investigate what these belated pipings signified. One of us closed the carriage door and a sleepy driver no doubt assumed that we had got in again. The strains led us to a one-storied peasant's house and looking in we perceived a carousal in progress. We were bidden to enter and made to sit down at a well-laden table and eat and drink. It was a wedding feast to be prolonged through the night. Gipsy musicians were producing from bagpipes and reed instruments a volume of sound which in the confined space was almost unbearable. At the end of the screed the wedding guests folded fifty and hundred drachmae notes like spills, and inserted them under the red fez worn by the leader till his forehead was fringed with paper currency. This lavish outlay puzzled me. But I afterwards learned that it was more apparent than real as an account was kept of the notes and only a percentage went to the musicians, the balance being restored. When after an hour or so we returned to where we had left our carriage, it had disappeared. The driver, hearing the door close, had gone on and he only discovered on arriving at Lechana that we were not inside. After disturbing the slumbers of as many of the villagers as had not been kept awake by the pipes, we at length found one who owned a horse and a light cart, and who consented to rise from his mattress and convey us chilled and rugless on our way to the point where we met our own carriage returning to look for us.

Dörpfeldt was working out his theory that the palace of Odysseus was not in the island now known as Ithaca, but in Santa Maura, where a causeway covered at certain seasons by low water links what is really a peninsula to the mainland. The question of Telemachus to Athena, disguised as the lord of the Taphians, whether she had arrived in a ship



since he did not suppose she had come by land, would therefore if applied to Santa Maura be intelligible and need not be regarded as an instance of ponderous Homeric humour. The veteran Schliemann, who had inducted him into archaeology, was still living in Athens. His enthusiasm for antiquity had not altogether killed in him the old business instincts which had enabled him to accumulate the fortune he so well employed. While the foundations for some new houses were being prepared on a site which he owned in the centre of the city, several rather interesting tombs came to light. Meeting him in the street I congratulated him on the discovery, and on his good luck which made it impossible for him to put the spade into the ground without securing a treasure. "Yes, yes," he said, "I gave so much for the ground, the building will cost me so much. The rents should provide a good return for my investment." Probably the tombs, being post-Homeric, did not interest him. According to a story told me by Leighton we missed by an insular lack of tolerance and appreciation securing for the British Museum the wonderful collection of his finds which was exhibited in London. Schliemann had been invited to become an honorary member of the Athenaeum and he, greatly appreciating the compliment and acting in the spirit of his eastern experience, forwarded a cheque to the secretary who had made the welcome announcement to him. It would have been easy to return it with a word of friendly explanation that the position of secretaries was not what he had supposed. But it seems that the Committee took another view and the invitation to the club was withdrawn. This gravely offended the old man, who, according to Leighton, had contemplated presenting this collection to the nation, and it went to Berlin instead.

The Hellenic Government showed a very liberal spirit in conceding sites to the foreign archaeological schools for research work, which contributed in constant progression to our historical and biological knowledge. There was a marked contrast to the principle of *fara da se* which has

been adopted in Italy, with the result that the marvellous treasures offered by such a field as Herculaneum, the cost of which is evidently beyond the means of any internal department, remain and probably will remain unexplored. A scheme with that object in view had been elaborated by my friend Sir Charles Walston assisted by Leonard Shoo-bridge, but it encountered chauvinistic opposition in the press as a last obstacle after all others had been surmounted and had to be abandoned. The former spent several months at the British school in Athens during my stay there, and stirred our archaeological sensibilities with his contagious enthusiasm. It was there also that I first met a great friend of after years, Mrs. Arthur Strong, then Miss Eugénie Sellers, who was at that time blind to all that was not Greek. If her subsequent activities at the British school at Rome have induced a certain transfer of allegiance and have even stimulated exploration of the artistic values of the baroque, I can only testify to my admiration of her work in every phase.

While in Greece I was myself tempted to follow a new line of investigation. Wandering over the country I became interested in the very numerous feudal castles which crowned strategic heights, even in regions which the Venetians had never held. The construction of these strongholds was generally assigned to the "Franks" and evidences of western or Latin nomenclature survived in many places. I was tempted to inquire more deeply into the history of these Franks, to discover what manner of men they were who established the *Francocratía* and came to dominate valleys hitherto exclusively associated in my mind with classical tradition and Hellenic myth. The result was that I began to collect materials for a study of Greece in the Middle Ages, during that obscure period when cadets of the great houses of Champagne and Burgundy and Flanders established feudal baronies in the Morea and central Greece, when there were Princes of Achaia and Dukes of Athens, the last dynasty of which bore the Tuscan name of Acciajuoli. The pursuit



of these investigations, which eventually entailed researches in the archives at Naples, Venice, Brussels and elsewhere, as well as the examination of many obscure records, had to be spread over a number of years owing to pressure of work in other parts of the world. So that it was not until some fifteen years after leaving Athens that I was able to publish the result.<sup>1</sup> By a curious coincidence my friend William Miller, whom I did not then know, published almost simultaneously his *Latins in the Levant*. These were the first two studies on the subject in English, except for the brief outline of Frankish history in Finlay's *Greece*.

The new year, 1890, brought to Athens the epidemic of influenza which had such fatal effects in every country on its first appearance. The custom prevails in Greece of dressing the dead in evening clothes, or at any rate in the best that the family can afford, as if for a festival, and of carrying them out thus attired exposed to public view in a flat shell, the cover of which is only put on at the grave. This exposition of the dead is as old as the laws of Solon. The chant of the accompanying choristers acts like an irresistible spell to draw the hearer to the window. Our house lay upon the road by which funeral processions passed to the cemetery and during this epidemic the frequency with which a new pair of boots coming round the corner indicated the arrival of the bier ended by getting on my nerves.

The Cretan situation was now quiescent. Shakir Pasha, who had been entrusted with the pacification, had been very successful in restoring internal order, and the only remaining trouble arose from the Sultan's Firman of amnesty, the terms of which were severe as regards the revolutionary leaders and the prominent exiles in Greece. Had the Firman been so drawn as to be immediately acceptable Shakir's triumph would have been complete, and he would have been indicated for the position of Grand Vizir, which would not have suited intriguers at the palace. As it was the

<sup>1</sup> *The Princes of Achaia and the Chronicles of Morea*. Arnold, 1907.

Firman provided a pretext for a threatened renewal of disturbance. The Cretan refugees filled the Greek newspapers with the usual "Balkanic" reports of persecutions, outrages, burnings and violations of women, and Shakir's attempts to explain away the harsher conditions carried no conviction. On the other hand our reports went to show that local conditions were fairly normal, that the fields were being cultivated in tranquillity, and that the behaviour of the troops had been good. Gradually, notwithstanding the attempts of agitators to excite opinion, things settled down, and as the year went on refugees began to return in considerable numbers. But in spite of a liberal interpretation of the amnesty the ringleaders were still excepted.

I was in relations with a certain number of the exiled chiefs, one of whom, Korkidis, a veteran of sixty-eight, impressed me very favourably. He had taken part in half-a-dozen revolutions and had done all he could to prevent the recent ferment from coming to a crisis. Our house was constantly haunted by a magnificent rebel, whose record both in his domestic and public capacity was hardly consistent with his name of Christodoulaki, the little servant of Christ. He wore the picturesque island costume, the full blue Turkish trousers to a little below the knee, held up by yellow sheepskin boots, the braided blue jacket, the red fez and the crimson waistband, which was an arsenal of lethal implements. One of his brothers was a prisoner in Rhodes, another a fugitive in the mountains of Sphakia and he was himself condemned to death. He had been a major of Gendarmerie, but all his men had left him and disappeared. He asked for regulars and receiving none retired to his village, whereupon he was branded as a deserter and therefore fled to Greece. His thousand sheep had been confiscated and consumed. This big powerful man, who was said to have killed seven Turks with his own hand in an engagement, used to weep like a child when he talked to me of the island from which he was exiled. He reminded me of the Homeric warriors whose tears were not regarded as unheroic. His



position in Greece was complicated by the arrival of another Sphakiot whose family had a blood feud against the family of Christodoulaki. In Sphakia as in Maina, which I was shortly to visit, the vendetta was still maintained. It was, however, understood that the local feud should be suspended during residence in Greece. I grew much attached to Christodoulaki and did what I could to help him. Eventually he also was included in the amnesty. I hope he followed a life of patriotic virtue when he returned.

It fell to my lot at this time, owing to some interruption in our routine of communications, to be sent several times to Brindisi with despatches. On the first occasion, it was in December, 1889, we encountered such bad weather in the Adriatic that our ship took refuge at Avlona or Valona. Having made acquaintance on board with an A.D.C. of Don Carlos, who had been there on a shooting expedition and knew the Pasha, I went ashore with him. The Governor was a great-nephew of the famous Ali Pasha of Jannina, and terribly bored with his isolation in the ancient city of Apollonia, where his only distraction seemed to be to play backgammon with the official doctor. He was very glad to see some unexpected visitors, and entertained us to dinner. The inhabitants of Avlona looked miserable and fever-stricken. I little anticipated then the importance which this roadstead and town, with the adjoining rock of Sasseno would assume in recent years. The delay of twelve hours involved my missing the Indian Mail at Brindisi. An English paper which had just arrived there announced the death of Robert Browning.

On my second journey to Brindisi some two months later I had four days to spare there before the arrival of the Indian Mail train with the return bag for Athens. I had thus the opportunity to gratify an old ambition by making a pilgrimage of sentiment to the birthplace of Horace, Venosa, the ancient Venusium. Communications across Apulia were still primitive in those days. At Rochetta, a station on the coastal railway, I found a diligence of antiquated construc-

tion which took me to Melfi, the old Norman capital, where Robert le Guiscard and his wife lie under their stone canopies in a church constructed of the fabric of old Roman buildings. Thence another carriage took me to Venosa, where in the evening dusk I found the only inn to consist of one large room used for all purposes, over vaulted arches which served as stables, and approached by an outside staircase.

A subsidiary railway line passing Venosa was in process of construction, and the supper table was occupied by some dozen foremen and mechanics, who made me welcome. We played a game with the fingers to decide who should pay for the wine. Each of those sitting round the table threw out a certain number of fingers of the right hand. When the total number of the extended fingers had been ascertained the players, beginning from the end of the table, were counted round and round till the number indicated by that total was reached. The individual upon whom that number fell was responsible for the next flagon. Was it some such process remaining traditional in this region to which Horace alluded when he asked, "*Quem Venus arbitrem dicet bibendi?*" They were all good fellows and we passed a merry evening. A few *soldi* paid for a litre of the strong Apulian wine. When they dispersed to sleep I knew not where, the host produced from a cupboard an iron bed and a mattress on which I slept contentedly. In the fair February morning light with the aid of a map I discovered all the familiar points of Horatian topography. Mt. Vultur dominated the landscape, and westwards I could identify the "lofty nest of Acherontia," the Bantian woods and the fertile fields of low-lying Ferentum. With the satisfaction of the pilgrim who has fulfilled a vow I returned to the coast at Cerignola. How many thousands of our eastward-bound or home-returning countrymen have passed down that Adriatic shore unconscious of the interest of those rarely explored South Italian cities which gleam ivory white against the blue sea; Trani with its great Cathedral, which saw the marriage of Manfred to Helen of Epirus, and some twelve



years later that of her niece Isabella Villehardouin, the heiress of Achaia, to Philip of Anjou ; and Bari with the great church of St. Nicholas, the goal of numbers of pilgrims from Russia. My mails did not reach Brindisi in time for the Patras boat, and I had thus, while waiting for a ship, an opportunity also to visit Taranto, an indispensable link in our communications with the Near East during the Great War, but in those days only beginning to develop the potentiality of its magnificent harbour which has become the chief naval station of Italy.

The news reached Athens not long after my return, that Bismarck had resigned. Count Herbert Bismarck had simultaneously withdrawn from public life. In the last elections to the Reichstag the socialist gains had been formidable, and had indicated a general change of spirit in Germany. But the disappearance of that historic figure came no doubt as something of a surprise to the world in general. It had been obvious for some time past in Berlin that a young and self-confident Emperor, who had shown impatience of parental control, would not readily submit to the tutelage which the Chancellor's supreme prestige and authoritative temperament had enabled him to establish in all but purely personal questions during the latter years of the old Emperor's long reign. Bismarck had already outlived the prescribed term of human activity and had passed his seventy-fifth birthday. But he had for so long been the dominant personality on the European stage that the element of increasing years had been overlooked, and his position had seemed unassailable.

Although the circumstances which led to his resignation did not, like other matters noted in my diaries, fall under my direct observation, I received information on the subject from first-hand sources which it may be of interest to place on record. There was evidence early in the new reign that a less cordial spirit than had been anticipated prevailed between the sovereign and his Chancellor. From correspondents in Berlin I had learned that the Emperor had been

indignant that, in proclaiming the diary of the Crown Prince Frederick to be of doubtful authenticity, Bismarck should have ventured to state that the Emperor William did not trust his son with important information. The implied slur upon his father's memory, made public without reference to the reigning sovereign, was justly resented.

Bismarck's own very clear account of the change in the new Emperor's attitude towards him, and of the gradual transfer of confidence to other counsellors, has now been published in the new chapters of his autobiography, some thirty years after it was written. Apart from the evident unpreparedness of the younger man to follow the veteran statesman's advice in various foreign and domestic questions, there were two specific issues on which their views proved irreconcilable. In the first place there was the new Labour legislation which the Emperor desired to introduce in the beginning of 1890 and his proposal to summon an International Labour Conference. By these measures he hoped to disarm the growing socialist agitation, while by simultaneously attenuating the rigour of existing anti-socialist legislation he counted on securing the sympathies of an industrial population continually growing in numbers and importance. Bismarck, on the other hand, considered his proposals as not only Utopian but also as dangerous in that they were likely to encourage unrealisable expectations. He held, moreover, that a withdrawal from the battle with social-democracy would be a step down-hill, tending to diminish the authority of the sovereign and to stimulate the encroaching tendency of parliament. In the second place, there was the question, the urgency of which had been revealed to the Chancellor during those discussions, whether or not other Prussian Ministers should report directly to the Sovereign without preliminary consultation and agreement with the Prime Minister, a procedure which he could not accept. An order of 1852 prescribing such preliminary understanding, regarded by Bismarck as indispensable to the Prime Minister's authority, was referred to



by the Emperor as an old yellow paper the existence of which had long been forgotten. Other matters of a less general character affecting the relations between the Prince and the Sovereign are set forth in the autobiography. But these were the two essential points which led to the final rupture and to the Emperor's insistence on his resignation both of the Prussian Prime-Ministership and of the Imperial Chancellorship, which Bismarck had originally understood was to be postponed until June, after certain new military requisitions had been submitted to the Reichstag.

On the morning of the 17th March the chief of the Military Cabinet, General von Hahnke, informed him that the Emperor insisted on the revocation of the order of 1852 and, in view of his unwillingness to agree, expected him to hand in his resignation forthwith—in fact that very afternoon. Bismarck explained that his health would not permit him to carry the resignation to the palace himself, and that he would send it in writing. A Cabinet meeting was at once called, and he submitted a statement of the reasons which had determined him to ask for his release from service. He states in his biography that all records of that Cabinet meeting were destroyed. Later in the day the head of the Civil Cabinet was sent from the palace to inquire why the resignation demanded in the morning had not been received. Hardly had it been despatched when General von Caprivi, who was designated as his successor, took possession of a portion of the official residence which he had occupied for so many years. The conclusion of his supreme service to his country was thus in the nature of a precipitate eviction.

Such is a brief summary of the Chancellor crisis as recounted by Bismarck himself at the time. The record, even though drawn up by one of the interested parties to the conflict, was not likely to contain essential errors of fact regarding matters which could easily then have been verified. But his exposition might nevertheless be coloured by a certain bias and have remained silent in regard to other factors which the writer could not appreciate. It is there-

fore interesting to compare the statements in the autobiography with the account of the episode which was given me by the Empress Frederick, during a journey on which I accompanied her in the Adriatic later in the same year. She would not have been influenced by any predisposition in favour of her life-long critic and antagonist.

She told me, however, that in the particular matter which led to his fall Bismarck was in her opinion right, for she held it to be ill-advised on the part of the Emperor to excite hopes in the social-democrats which could not be fulfilled. Bismarck had himself been for some time absent from the capital when, towards the end of January, 1890, he heard from his son Herbert that the Emperor contemplated taking an initiative in Labour policy without further reference to himself. He rushed back to Berlin and found that the Emperor had himself drafted a rescript announcing his intentions. He characterized its terms as impossible and undignified, and asked leave to be allowed to rewrite it. He worked at it all night and submitted the revised text the following day, begging the Emperor at the same time not to act hastily, but to give the document all his attention and then to discuss it with him again—in any case not to publish it without further consideration, as it was not what the Chancellor could have wished it to be, but only the best he could prepare in so short a time. The Emperor had appeared to assent, but nevertheless despatched it at once to the *Gazette* and had it published. When on the following day Bismarck returned to the palace, the Emperor's manner towards him was very abrupt, and to his inquiry, "Am I in your way?" he received the curt answer, "Yes!" The Chancellor then announced that he would resign, but he went away under the impression that his resignation was to be deferred until a more opportune moment. As it did not follow as quickly as the Emperor had really intended, a message was sent to accelerate it, which greatly offended the old man.

The Empress added that most of the men who had been



consulted on the Labour question were absolutely ignorant of the subject. Hinzpeter, for instance, the Emperor's former tutor, was a dogmatic schoolmaster and doctrinaire, perfectly honest, but without any practical experience, and convinced that nothing could be successful which was not initiated by the State. Von Heyden, the artist, had been selected because, when quite a young man, he had been for a year a mining official ; a most worthy man but quite useless as an adviser in such difficult matters. He probably was never in close touch with miners, and any experience of them which he might have had dated back to twenty years earlier. It is interesting to note that these observations of the Empress are almost identical with those of Bismarck in the autobiography. She regarded the Emperor's action as really well-intentioned, but as betraying immaturity of judgment. There were already, she said, institutions in existence, similar to those which he now recommended, which she and his father had founded. But the Emperor had never taken any interest in them and he did not understand the thorny side of the Labour question.

There was perhaps an *amari aliquid* in these appreciations, as the parent is traditionally slow to admit maturity of judgment in the son. The Empress also, I think, failed to realize that the step was not so much due to youthful impulse as to deliberate calculation. It was essential to his own liberty of action, which the Emperor was determined to vindicate, to rid himself of a mentor whom he regarded as stereotyped in certain grooves of thought and policy, and he jumped at an opportunity which he believed would redound to his credit as a popular sovereign, obliged to part with a Minister who opposed his efforts to improve the conditions of the labouring classes. This might assist him to stem the currents which would be liberated by the abolition of anti-socialist legislation.

In any case the words used in the rescript addressed to the Prince in reply to his request to be exonerated from service :  
"With deep emotion I have perceived that you are deter-

mined to retire from the office which you have filled for so many years," and again, "The motives of your resolve—convince me that further attempts to persuade you to take back your offer would have no prospect of success," are hardly consistent with the fact that he was virtually dismissed.

Finally, somewhat in contrast with Bismarck's account of this much-discussed event, confirmed in many details by the Empress Frederick, there is the Emperor's own exposition of the crisis to Malet, which the latter reported to me in a long letter in reply to my inquiries. Already in February the Chancellor had told him that the Emperor was going too fast for him, that he disapproved of the Labour Conference and that he intended to resign his office as Prussian Prime Minister. A little later he told Malet that he had found it would not be practical to retain the position of Imperial Chancellor, and only withdraw from the Prime Ministership; he would therefore retire altogether from public life, but he proposed first to meet the new Reichstag and endeavour to secure its assent to fresh military credits. The old man spoke bitterly and said that the young Emperor regarded him as an elderly nuisance. Malet had heard little more until the 17th of March when the Chancellor's resignation was pressed for. Four days later the Emperor went over the whole ground with him at length. He had, he said, been compelled to take up the social question because, if he had not done so, the socialists and the ultramontanes would have joined hands and forced such legislation on the country in the Reichstag. The Emperor thought it more politic to take the initiative himself. The Chancellor was strongly opposed to the contemplated action and as he never gave way about anything he had to be broken. The discussions which had taken place had been far from pleasant. Bismarck had tried to frighten him with the methods which had proved successful with his grandfather; but the Emperor's only serious preoccupation was for the physical effects which excitement might produce on the old



man. The doctors had assured him that the Prince was in a condition in which a nervous crisis might ensue at any moment, and he had requested the resignation in order to save his life. The Bismarck family were now irritated against him, but he hoped in a few months' time, when health had been restored by rest, that they would recognize that he had saved the veteran statesman to his country for some years to come. Bismarck did indeed survive the crisis for another ten years. He insists in his biography that his physical condition at that time was quite satisfactory and he seems also to have assured Malet that health had nothing to do with the issue. The Emperor confirmed that the Chancellor had at first announced his intention of only resigning the Prussian Prime-Ministership, and subsequently said that he would retire altogether. But a fortnight later he had sent a message to say that he did not propose to retire at all and began to undertake additional work, while the doctors were urging that if he did not desist from efforts of all kinds the consequences might be disastrous.

Malet's view was that the Emperor had honestly desired to work with Bismarck, but that he had not foreseen that his deliberate intention to make his own will prevail rendered such co-operation impossible. He must either have given way himself or he must break his Minister, and he preferred the latter alternative. And so the curtain fell on the Bismarck era. The indispensable man, as he had so long appeared to be, vanished from the scene. And yet the world went on with little apparent disturbance. Thirty years were yet to pass before the world would realize the pregnancy of Gerwinus' pronouncement that Bismarck was only an episode.

The remission of the currant duty in Great Britain in the Spring of 1890 made us very popular in Greece. The public was moreover greatly impressed with the absolute secrecy which had been maintained during the negotiations and for a month or two afterwards, until a simultaneous announcement could be made in the Budget speech in England and by Tricoupis in Parliament at Athens, when it came as a

complete surprise. Greek stocks rose with a jump, and it was considered remarkable that the very few who knew should have taken no advantage of their knowledge. To have obtained this concession from the British Government was of course a strong card for Tricoupis, who had to face a general election in the Autumn, with a majority in the Chamber now reduced to about ten. In so small a house the value of even a single vote was high, and the demands of deputies who had to be conciliated increased with a dwindling majority. This is the special weakness of the democratic system in many continental countries where public opinion rather encourages than restrains the power of the deputy, who becomes an agent for demanding privileges and concessions and thus tends to place his obligations to his constituents above his obligations to his country. The position of a Minister of high principle like Tricoupis, who honestly believed his own continuance in office to be indispensable to his country, must therefore be very difficult. A young naval officer in command of a destroyer explained to me that even the naval service suffered from the pressure exerted by deputies. One of his men had asked him for leave. As his ship was undermanned and there were literally not hands enough to do the work, he was obliged to refuse. Thereupon the sailor applied to his deputy, who at once obtained superior orders over-riding the commander's decision.

A number of similar stories were told me. The gossip of the salons was busy in the summer with an incident which may have been overstated by partisans of the opposition, but which was certainly taken seriously by the German Legation. The doctor who had for many years filled the position of *accoucheur* to the Court had recently died. A rather elderly deputy, a supporter of the government, who had been a doctor but was said not to have practised his profession for many years, went to Vienna and followed a course of obstetrics under a celebrated authority in that capital. Returning with a testimonial of competency, he



applied for the position of *accoucheur* to the Court. Had he not obtained it he would of course have gone over to the opposition. Tricoupis, as a bachelor, did not perhaps appreciate the importance of the matter. In any case a politician without any great record of practical experience was appointed to this post of delicate responsibility. Fortunately there were no evil results and an extremely competent German nurse was mistress of the situation when the confinement of the Crown Princess took place in July, 1890. But feeling ran high when a doctor was sent from Germany after the event to report upon the health of the Princess, and the German Minister must have had some difficult moments.

The Queen of Greece only arrived in Athens from Russia two days after the event, and the Empress Frederick still later in H.M.S. *Surprise*, on the 31st July. The christening on the 18th August, was only attended by heads of Missions, but I was exceptionally invited as a friend of the family. For the Greek baby, the ceremony is a formidable one, but fortunately at that age they are unconsciously stoical. At the end of the month the Empress was to return to Venice by the Dalmatian coast, and she invited me to accompany her in the *Surprise*. We started from Corinth, and lay the first night off Lepanto. After a short stay at Corfu, we went on to Antivari and wonderful Ragusa. That once flourishing commercial republic, from whose rich trading fleets the name of "argosy" is said to have been derived by metathesis, accepted political extinction with dignified resignation. I was told that the descendants of its ancient patrician stock in many cases had refused to marry and preferred racial extinction to a life without a morrow. We entered the narrow gate of that remarkable fiord known as the Bocche di Cattaro, and looked up at the Black Mountain with its zigzag road climbing to Cettinje. But the Prince was at that time out of favour with the Empress, and so I missed an opportunity of seeing the patriarchal court of Montenegro whose secular defiance

of the crescent has not availed to save it from absorption in a composite Jugo-Slavia. Spalato, contained within the area of Diocletian's palace, even surpassed my anticipations. The son of the Dalmatian slave who co-ordinated the elaborate bureaucracy of the Roman Empire and abandoned the pinnacle of human greatness to return to mother earth and watch the growth of plants and flowers had indeed vast conceptions. Dalmatia, isolated between the sundering walls of the Dinaric Alps and the sea, seemed almost as completely cut off from the hinterland as that long chain of islands, past which we steamed on the following day to Zara, the sentinel of Venice for six hundred years on the Eastern Adriatic shore.

During the many mornings at sea and excursions ashore on which I escorted the Empress, there were interesting conversations regarding affairs in Germany, which were, however, of too intimate and private a character to be recorded. She still spoke with some bitterness of the misrepresentations of which she had been a victim, and of the want of chivalry which had left her almost without a voice to defend her. I cited an old friend of mine, Prince Henry of Carolath, as an exception, and she gratefully recognized that in the class to which he belonged he had been one of the very few who had dared courageously to fight her battles. She told me much of her early relations with Bismarck and of how his suspicious nature had made her the object of a system of espionage which had been almost intolerable. Time, however, had brought its revenges. When the Chancellor was dismissed and came to take his leave of her, he had thanked her for all the consideration and fairness she had always shown him. Thus they had parted with cordiality, but she could not resist saying that after all open opponents need not be the worst friends.

The *Surprise* took me back to Brindisi. This expedition to my regret gave some annoyance to my old chief at Berlin, who was anxious that I should return to that post and who had hoped to smooth over the difficulty with the Emperor.



A certain duality between mother and son had become a matter of public notoriety, and he felt that it would be more difficult for me to come back after having accompanied the Empress in her travels and being thus under suspicion of partisanship. I could only answer that I had in no way sought to intervene in questions which did not concern me. Circumstances had combined to bring me into very close relations at the time of her great trial with the Princess whom I had known in happier days. I had no desire to return to Berlin on sufferance. If it were accounted unrighteous to be loyal so much the worse. So many of her oldest friends had abandoned her to follow the rising star, and I did not intend to follow their example.

It may be appropriate here to anticipate and to relate the subsequent vicissitudes in my relations with the Emperor, which I will merely record without malice or comment. About a month after the exchange of letters to which I have referred, Malet wrote to me to say that he had discussed my position with His Majesty, who had been pleased to be gracious and made no objection to my resuming my duties at Berlin. I was therefore forgiven, and indeed when some months afterwards I paid a private visit to Berlin, the Emperor, who saw me in the Linden as he drove past, gave me a most friendly greeting. I therefore concluded that the incident was finally closed. Nevertheless, though Berlin was undoubtedly one of the most interesting posts of observation in my service, where many omens during my four years' residence had impressed me with significance for the future, I decided not to make any effort to return. The position would not have been an easy one, and relations which I had no intention of repudiating might once more have led to misunderstandings. A transfer to Italy had been mentioned as a possibility, and much as I should have appreciated a further period of service with Malet, there were few posts more desirable than Rome.

Many years afterwards, when Sir Frank Lascelles was Ambassador at Berlin, having written a book on a subject

in which I believed the Emperor was interested, I asked Lascelles to invite his acceptance of a copy. It may be that the moment selected was not an opportune one at which to put forward the request, and indeed Lascelles admitted that the horizon that day was somewhat thunderous. In any case the Emperor, who had apparently forgotten that he had forgiven me, observed with particular asperity, "What does he want to send me a book for? He wrote a book once directed against my person!" The latter comment was quite untrue and the imperial memory was clearly at fault, because he had himself told Malet at the time that he had no objection to the book on its merits.

Many more years passed before I had an opportunity of meeting the Emperor again. It came, however, when he paid a visit to Stockholm while I was Minister in that capital. He there received all the heads of Missions in turn, and was most cordial to me, making no reference to these incidents of the past. During a visit to England also, he paid a visit to my sister-in-law, Mrs. Stuart-Wortley, who was staying with my wife in Stratford Place, while I was abroad. He remained about an hour taking tea and spoke to my wife in the most friendly way about myself.

So ended my personal relations with the man of destiny. The interest of the story is in its illustration, in a very minor matter, of an inconsequence which has been conspicuous in greater matters.



## CHAPTER VII

### GREECE, 1890-1891

Throughout the year 1890, I remained in Greece and did not go to "Europe," as people still had the habit of saying in Athens. I was consequently able to spend my leisure in exploring the country and studying social and economic conditions. In May, I started with my friend Leonard Shoobridge, on a very interesting expedition to the Morea, in the course of which we visited regions then, and possibly still even now, little known to the traveller.

Armed with letters from Tricoupis, and especially from the Bey of Maina, Mavromichalis, who represented that province in Parliament, we left Piraeus in a coasting steamer heavily laden with cargo for Calamata, and at daybreak the following morning reached Gythion, the port of Sparta, lying under a spur of Taygetus, at the head of the Laconian Gulf. A notable of Gythion to whom I had a letter of introduction, Kyrios Tzoraki, was absent in the country. But his brother gave us every assistance, and our dragoman lost no time in hiring horses and pack mules; three of the former for us and for himself to ride, and two of the latter for the cook, his cooking utensils, and our beds and baggage. After about an hour's ride we stopped to lunch at a delightful spot where Tzoraki was building a house with material taken from an old fortress tower. He had begun with the garden. A fence of cypress trees, forming a complete square, walled in masses of double geranium in full flower. Beyond were currant plantations, some Tuscan vines and the olive woods, mounting the slopes.

Our plan was first to explore the peninsula of Maina, the

prolongation of the beautiful range of Taygetus which parts Laconia from Messenia, and ends in Cape Matapan, a land almost unknown to western visitors. There was an attraction in the sinister name which it bore, *Kakoboulia*, the land of evil counsel. The Eparchy had practically no civil administration nor was it traversed by any roads. There were in fact people living there who had never seen a cart. Special privileges and immunity from direct taxation had been accorded to the Mainotes for their services in the war of independence. The concession perhaps made a virtue of a necessity, as it would certainly have puzzled the authorities to collect a revenue.

We crossed the northern end of the peninsula by steep stair-like bridle-paths, through a gap in the Taygetus range, leaving to the right the Frankish fortress of Passava, which derived its name from *Passe-Avant*, the battle cry of Jean de Neuilly, hereditary marshal of the feudal principality of Achaia. After several hours we entered the ascending gorge of a torrent, beside which the oleanders were already budding, to emerge into a very stony land which seemed to produce little but wild thyme. Between two great rocks which looked as if an earthquake had sundered them we had a brief glimpse of the sea on the farther side, and then white mists rolled up with evening and little more was visible till we reached the village of Areopolis, whither the cook had preceded us to prepare a bivouac in the house of a friend of Mavromichalis.

Only in the morning could we realize the position of this group of fortress-like houses clustered round a church under a great square mountain bluff. Westward and southward extended a rock shelf or tableland which broke eventually in precipitous cliffs to the sea. A deep ravine separated us from the mountains to the north, and on the farther side was Itylo, a Venetian fortress familiar to me from an illustration in Coronelli's "Theatre of the War in Morea under Morosini."

Over all this tableland which we were to traverse marching



southward there is no water save what is collected in cisterns from the rainfall. It was the stoniest land I ever saw, and the poorest. Terraces had been buttressed with infinite pains to hold a little soil, and on these and in pockets of the rock a thin grain is grown which has almost to be gathered ear by ear. There is said, however, to be some better land in the hollows of the barren-looking grey mountains, which form the spine of the peninsula. The lupin bean is described as the grape of Maina, But a few vines are grown near the higher villages. The prickly pear and the fig seemed the only fruits. A few carob and vallonea oak trees maintain themselves, and a small olive seems to thrive in the stony ground. For fuel the women go long distances into the mountains, starting at dawn and returning in the evening with great bundles of dry scrub and wild thyme. The latter seems to defy the general atrophy of nature and thrusting up everywhere between the stones makes the whole air aromatic. The very bees that collect honey from it live in hives of stone. The few sheep or pigs we saw were dwarfed and lean.

The sparse villages consist of castellated houses or rather towers. On the ground floor is an olive press, and only the upper story is inhabited. The dwelling rooms are not reached by a staircase, but by a ladder which is drawn up at night for security. The men are spare, lithe and active, dark haired and rather dark complexioned. The nose is prominent, the forehead high and vertical, and there is a tendency to hollowness of the cheeks. There is little costume in Maina. What is seen approaches rather that of the islanders. Women wear a red stripe round the skirt when not in mourning. If a near relative has died they remove it for two years. There are many Doricisms in the local language as in that of Crete. The unchanging character of mountaineers would suggest that this people may really be descended from the old *Perioeci* of Laconia, though the more northern sections of Taygetus were colonized by Slavs in the eighth century. In spite of

the poverty of a region with such physical disadvantages the Mainotes are intensely patriotic, and though numbers of them are compelled to seek employment elsewhere, they return in due course to their native mountains, where such land as is relatively productive fetches high prices.

Family and village feuds are chronic. But these are purely domestic affairs. Two men with guns on their shoulders and pistols in their belts, who were known to our mule-driver, issued from a village. In response to my question why they went armed he told me that one of them had thrown over a girl of Areopolis to whom he had been engaged, and a family quarrel had ensued. One man had already been killed on each side. Therefore members of the respective houses went abroad in pairs, armed for protection and if necessary for attack. Those who killed got away into the mountains, where they could defy pursuit, and as a rule justice forgot them after a few years.

From the seaward edge of the plateau we looked down upon a series of little creeks and bays dominated by fortress towers which might well have harboured Conrad and Medora. In one of the villages through which we passed some sixty or seventy women were squatting on the ground outside a house singing "myrologies," or dirges for the dead. An old woman had died two days before and custom prescribed this chanting for three days after death, to be repeated on the ninth and again on the fortieth day. They paused to look at us and resumed their monotonous song.

After halting at a modest hermitage occupied by a solitary monk from the great monastery of Megaspylon in the north of the Morea, who promised us hospitality on our return journey, we pressed on to the little port of Gerolimani to which we descended through a gorge and torrent bed of irredeemable rock, after a seven hours' ride. A dozen houses clustered round a delightful pirate creek, where a couple of brigs and a few caiques lay at anchor under a bold headland. A grand sunset reddened all the western face of the rocks away to Matapan. After the



long and weary clatter over the shifting stones a wonderful sense of peace possessed this remote little haven where quiet waters lapped a shingle beach. Gerolimeni does quite an extensive business in the export of quail and of the oil of Maina. But the passage of the quail was over long ago. We found shelter for the night in the upper floor of its solitary warehouse.

The cook returned with our beds and baggage to the hermitage, while we started very early next morning for Porto Kaio, the quail haven. Before long slate replaced the marble and limestone of the mountains, whose sides were terraced nearly to the summit of the ridge. We looked up at the once formidable castle of Maina, which Guillaume Villehardouin is credited with having built, though there was certainly a fortress there before the Frankish occupation. But time would not allow us to explore the Taenarian cave and the fabled gate of Pluto's realm, and after a swim in the intensely clear sea we lunched and started on our way back to the little monastery.

I had already picked up one or two interesting folk-songs in Maina, and hoped to secure some more with the assistance of the Abbot, as he was styled, though he had only one lay brother to rule over. But by an unfortunate coincidence the local rhapsodist was in prison. We dined on the flat roof of the hermitage. The Abbot had lived there for ten years: a solitary life for an intelligent man. He was anxious to have information of what was going on in the outer world. In Greek political issues he took no interest. He denounced all politicians as charlatans and politics as only the chase after office. Occasionally newspapers were sent him from Areopolis, but the men who wrote them he sweepingly described as the fathers of lies. The Mainotes never read newspapers. As they paid no taxes they did not trouble their heads about Governments and their doings. When an election took place many of them consulted him as to how they should vote. They were a wild race and ignorant, but they were

very hardworking. We seemed indeed very remote from the world and the ambitions of men among this primeval people who only wished to be left alone to derive a very meagre living from a very thankless soil in their own way. Night came upon us as we sat talking on the terrace by the chapel roof; the tableland sloping westward became one with the darkling sea and the stars seemed to hang down like lamps from the intense ultramarine of the sky. Then we slept gloriously in one of the unoccupied cells till daybreak, when we were to start and endeavour to reach Gythion in a single march.

Taking a path which followed the edge of the mountains, we eventually ascended through a wild gorge towards a sort of pass which traverses the rocky spine of Maina. Four hours of laborious climbing brought into view the eastern side of the peninsula, where pearl-grey cliffs descended abruptly to the sea. From the crest, a path of breakneck steepness led downwards to greener hills and more fertile valleys, to where nightingales were singing and running water trickled through groves of cypress and mulberry. In the afternoon we rejoined the road by which we had started, and saw the castle of Passava crowning its sentinel hill. For the sake of Margaret de Neuilly, who after many vicissitudes brought it by marriage to her third husband, Jean de St. Omer, the site had to be explored. I could find no trace of the old road by which the gate must have been approached. But a peasant who was working in the fields showed me a path which led to a breach in the walls. He told me that on his property there were a number of columns lying prone some four or five feet below the present surface of the soil. Passava itself occupies an ancient citadel, probably the Homeric Las, and traces of the old polygonal walls appear in the medieval curtain, flanked by round towers at the four angles. The single tunnelled entrance is only wide enough to admit one rider at a time. Within are remains of numerous buildings and vast cisterns, but arbutus and



lentisk have invaded all the courts since Morosini finally destroyed its defensive power in 1685. The site was admirably chosen, commanding the entrance into Maina, and the roads into Laconia, and watching the whole gulf between Capes Malea and Matapan.

Our friend Tzorlaki, warned by telegraph of our return, had ridden out half way to Passava to meet us. He conducted us back to the red geranium garden in the square of cypress trees. In the centre on an improvised table was a cold lamb roasted whole on a wooden spit, à la Palikar, with, of course, a tiny clove of garlic and other excellent herbs sewn up inside; a great pile of lettuces, flagons of wine pressed from his Tuscan grapes, and other minor delicacies. After the scanty fare of Maina, and a very long day over difficult ground, such a banquet in a spot of surpassing beauty, as evening closed in upon the highlands of Taygetus and the darkling gulf, was an experience never to be forgotten. I have sampled innumerable banquets, from those of the most fastidious old-world courts to the red-pepper pilaffs of King Menelek, but none has left an impression to compare with this simple feast in Armida's garden. The lanterns were lit and we sat late through the warm evening, so that it was not till near midnight that we reached the hospitable roof of our host in Gythion.

The drive on the following day to Sparta was hot and dusty. But it was a great moment when we descended into "hollow Lacedaemon," lying like an inverted shield between the mountains to the east and west, and the lower hill formations to the north and south. It was a rich land intersected with many little streams descending from the foothills of Taygetus, where the snow still whitened the higher summits, to join the broad Eurotas. It was the eve of the Greek May-day, and everywhere one heard the sound of pipes and drums while children carried garlands and branches of blossoms. The kilts of the men had been washed and were of the whitest. The women in the silk

spinneries were singing to the running water as they spun. The very prisoners in the gaol sat at the barred windows smiling as they talked to their friends without. The whole country-side seemed to have caught the madness of May.

The ancient city lay in a land of great fertility. The charm and natural beauty of its surroundings seemed indeed strangely inconsistent with the stern character of the Spartan ideal and the stoic social order of Lycurgus. It is suggestive that it should not have been here where nature is bountiful, but in Attica, where the soil is thin and poor and the mountains bare of vegetation, that the Greek cult of beauty took its rise and the intelligence of men was stirred to investigate the nature of the human soul.

At Sparta a new cavalcade had to be collected, and it was only late in the evening that we set out by paths scented with blossom and lit with glow-worms to ride to Mistra,<sup>1</sup> the new Lacedaemon founded by William Villehardouin in 1250, where Goethe, not inappropriately, set the scene for the mystical union of Faust and Helena, the meeting of Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Although it was nearly eleven before we arrived there, we were hospitably welcomed by an old priest, who with his family occupied what had once been the episcopal residence. The following day was spent in exploring the citadel and the many interesting Byzantine churches of the ancient capital of the Despotate of Morea, as the Greek province came to be called after the restoration of the Palaeologi.

But Mistra, guarding the entrance of the road into Messenia, with its wonderful outlook over the plain of the Eurotas, is too well-known to the traveller in Greece to need description here. In the evening we rode on to the

<sup>1</sup> This name has been variously derived from "magistra," from "Messire," and from "Myzithra" a goat's milk cheese made in the Morea. As there is evidence that the site bore this name before the advent of the Franks, the last offers the most acceptable etymology.



village of Trypi, in a verdant setting of chestnut and mulberry trees, to pass the night before crossing the hardly less well-known Langhada pass. The lower hills before we entered the defiles of that rugged gorge were velvety green with a low growth of dwarf oak, lentisk, arbutus and judas. The solitude of the highlands was literally awe-inspiring. For hours we marched without seeing a vestige of humanity. In the higher altitude the wild flowers were still in their full spring luxuriance; a few cyclamen still hid in crannies of the rocks; there were crimson anemones, poppies, scarlet and terra cotta, yellow broom and the white and purple cystus. In spite of an early start it was six in the afternoon before we had crossed the last ridge and looked down upon the plain of Messenia, and the waters of the western gulf sweeping in a splendid curve from the heights of Maina to Corone in vaporous distance under the setting sun. There was still a long and weary descent to Calamata, the family appanage of the Villehardouins, where we spent the night, *hospitio modico*. The harbour still maintained an old tradition of trade with Benghazi in Cyrenaica, and wore a busy air of prosperity. There is a local tradition that the Bonaparte family emigrated thence to Corsica, and that their Italianized name was a translation of the Greek equivalent *Kalomeros*.

As we were exploring the little town a voice was heard calling out to us in broken English, from behind a barred window. It was a young German who said he was in prison for debt, and asked for assistance. I obtained from him the name and address of his family in Germany, and duly communicated with them. After my return to Athens I received a telegram from his father saying: "My son Fritz has already bolted twice, and I will not pay a cent."

Here fresh mules were chartered in charge of a Mainote as *agoyate*. The undulating Messenian plain is very rich, and the villages suggested agricultural well-being with their two-storied balconied houses and flourishing gardens. It would be superfluous here to speak of the great walls

of Messene, upwards of five miles in circumference, or the tower-like rock citadel of Ithome, which so many travellers have described. In the monastery of Vourkano, where we spent the night, our Mainote muleteer, who had been wrestling in fierce argument with Nikola, the dragoman, openly mutinied and declined to go any further. He came to renew his grievances to me, but as his contract was with the dragoman I declined any discussion and told him rather sharply to go away. The monk who was in charge of us expressed great satisfaction and he then confided to me that this man, whom he had been unpleasantly surprised to see, was an ex-sergeant of gendarmerie, and that he had in this very monastery some years ago killed another sergeant. He had been two and a half years in prison, and then had somehow obtained his liberty and became a mule-driver. It is pleasanter when it can be avoided not to travel with an assassin. But as no other animals were obtainable at Messene we had to compromise. After rising at four and climbing the hill of Ithome to see the sun rise we started at seven for the Arcadian border. Near the villages great hedges of prickly pears lined the road and gigantic spiders had spun webs from side to side covering a span eight feet or more in breadth. It would have been interesting to study the architectural process and to realize how the first rope is stretched across on which the whole structure depends. Then we began to climb the Arcadian highlands. From the ridge of the first crest we took a last look at the green Messenian plain, the distant gulf and Maina in the hazy distance of noon. The beauty of that Arcadian world which we entered as the sun declined surpassed in form and colour all my anticipations. I shall not attempt to render it in words, having already done my best to express it in a collection of poems on Greece which I published at the end of my stay in Athens.<sup>1</sup> But there is one point which I would emphasize. It seems to be generally accepted that the Arcadia of idyllic romance had

<sup>1</sup> *The Violet Crown.* Arnold,



nothing in common with the Arcadia of reality. A distinguished writer, who undoubtedly visited a section of the province, has in fact written regarding popular notions of Arcadian felicity, "there are none more historically false, more unfounded in the real nature and aspect of the country, and more opposed to the sentiments of the ancients."<sup>1</sup> The late Professor Mahaffy, in his charming Hellenic studies, has more than once recorded observations which my perhaps longer experience of Greece cannot endorse. But it is especially the second of the three repudiations quoted above which I would contest, merely observing with regard to the third that of all the ancient gods, after the Arcadian Zeus, Pan was the most universally worshipped in this land, and that the Nomian mountains in the Lykaon range were, according to Pausanias, so called because they were the "pastures of Pan." The nature and aspect of the province varies considerably, for it is the largest of all the divisions, and when the coast-lands are eliminated, all the rest of the Morea is practically Arcadia. It is a land of rugged mountain and wild gorge. But it is just in the Alpine valleys of such a land that pastoral people are wont to live and, setting aside the question how far this idyllic life of Arcadia ever was or ever claimed to be historically true, these river-watered hollows sundered by forest-clad ridges are surely the most appropriate background for the fiction or the fact. Those who have penetrated the fairy valley which lies under the great cliff of Turtovana will justify Virgil in making Pheneos the home of the pastoral King Evander, and for me the name Arcadia ever recalls familiar pictures of shady valleys with picturesque camps of nomad shepherds and bleating flocks, with running streams and Alpine flowers and the music of innumerable nightingales.

Our first night's quarters, where the cook was already at work, in the village of Dragoi were in a very modest cottage. There was no vent for the smoke except between the loosely

<sup>1</sup> J. P. Mahaffy, *Rambles and Studies in Greece*.

superimposed tiles of the roof, nor was there any furniture save a box for storing the household grain, which served as our dinner table, while we sat upon the floor. From Dragoi we explored the walls of Phigaleia, and the beautiful temple at Bassae, with thirty-six of its forty-two columns still standing, which the Phigaleians built to "Apollo the Healer," when he had stayed the pestilence. The ruins are too remote and solitary to have become a quarry for building material, and the fallen columns and the cornices which an earthquake threw down lie where they fell with the frieze which was removed to the British Museum in 1812. The morning was cloudy. Partridges were calling all round the temple, presaging rain, and soon it began to fall in torrents. We took refuge in a cave, where we collected enough material to make a fire and dry our clothes. Then the great storm-clouds went rolling northwards and the rain-washed slopes and pastoral valleys grew even fairer than before as we rode over a shoulder of huge Lykaon to Andritzena, a most enchanting little township in the hills, where every angle of the wide-eaved street was a picture. Here we found comfortable quarters, for Andritzena, lying on the high road from Olympia to Tripolitza and Nauplia, was accustomed to receive travellers. Here also we were able to obtain excellent ponies for the next stage of the journey through the heart of Arcadia to Pheneos and the gulf of Corinth.

The descent was very steep from Andritzena into the valley through which one tributary of the Alphoeus runs westward, down to where the waterflow of countless aeons has tunnelled its winding way through the rocks. And now Arcadia veritably responded to its legendary reputation. In all the valleys separated by the successive ridges which we crossed, groups of nomad shepherds, busy with the milking or the shearing, presented idyllic pictures in their improvised camps under the vallonea oaks. We had to content ourselves with only a distant glimpse of Carytena, the castle of Geoffroi de Bruyères, the favourite comrade



of William Villehardouin, guarding the eastern entrance to the Alphoeus valley. I visited it some fifteen years afterwards for the sake of that paladin of Frankish chivalry, with the beautiful name and the romantic story, who broke his feudal obligation to his Prince in the hour of need for the light in a woman's eyes, and was sent back to the Morea by the great-hearted Manfred "King of Allemain," with a reinforcement of horse and foot, but also with a halter round his neck, to make his peace and be forgiven.

About six that evening we rode through the little village of Markou on the last ridge before that to which clings the lofty Dhimitzana where we were to pass the night. We were about 3,000 feet above the sea, in the very centre of Morea, and what we there saw as we looked back was thus recorded in my note-book. The sun was already low and clear beneath a dark bank of cloud. Facing us and towering high above the lower lines of mountain which we had traversed was the splendid range of Lykaon, rainbow-hued in the light and cobalt in the shadows, descending eastward in many spurs towards the central Arcadian plain and sloping gently westward through the ridges of Palaeocastro to the sea. The rounder foothills assumed forms so softly moulded by distance and the evening magic that they rather seemed a crumpled tissue of fallen silk than a system of rocks and gorges, with their sunward faces tinted like amethyst and jade. To the west, across the wide dip which divided us from Lykaon, we could see the lower ranges of Elis faintly indicated in a succession of pearl-coloured waves, paling into indistinctness, through which like a burnished silver thread Alphoeus wound his way into the sea of molten gold beyond. The phantom island in the horizon was Zante. Southwards and eastwards the summits of the heights which enclose the central Arcadian plain were lost in dove-grey cloud. In the middle distance below rose the square bluff of rock crowned by the castle of Carytena. In the foreground

were the red-roofed houses and the walnut groves of Markou. Almost the whole Morea from sea to sea lay outspread before us, transfigured in the fleeting moment, not quite as it had ever been seen before by human eye, nor quite as it would ever be seen again, but not to be surpassed in loveliness.

Beyond Dhimitzana the next morning we entered the forest region of Arcadia, dense in places with great mountain firs, intersected by valleys where the streams turned rustic mills. It was new country to our retainers, and in the little Deme of Vitina, a group of five villages, I for the first time made use of a letter from Tricoupis commending us to the good offices of authority and asked the Demarch or Mayor to direct us on our way to the lake of Pheneos which lay under the masses of Chelmos and Cyllene, now closing in the north. The Demarch, a big handsome Arcadian, wearing the white kilt and blue embroidered waistcoat, was full of hospitable intentions, and would have detained us in his well-appointed house. But we were anxious for more time at Pheneos and he therefore proposed to accompany us to Daru, where he owned another property, from which we could reach the lake in three hours on the following day. We traversed the highest cultivated and inhabited land in the Morea. So high was it that the vines were hardly yet in leaf in middle May. Then we descended once more into a pastoral land, and visited the springs known as the sources of the Ladon, whose waters, joining the river of the Carytena valley, become the Alphoeus. The property of our host included a great fenced garden, with almond, cherry, peach, apple and pomegranate trees, which had once been the estate of the famous Arnaout Oglou. The house had apparently been uninhabited for years, but served very well for our camp. The friendly Demarch joined us at dinner, and took thought for all our needs in the morning, including a guide to Pheneos. The kindly hospitality of the Greeks, both those of the mountains and those of the islands, unfailingly



offered with a perfect natural courtesy, is a gracious tradition of the old times.

Our guide was from Daru, which like many of the Arcadian villages is peopled by Albanians. These colonists have become Hellenized, and would probably have already lost their original language were it not that at that time there were hardly any schools for girls, so that the first language taught in the family by the mothers remained Albanian. He conducted us by giddy paths across a grand and very wild country of rock and gorge into a forest zone of magnificent fir. High up as we were the May sun grew burning hot at noon, and we asked him whether he knew of any spring of running water. He gave little hope in view of the lateness of the season. But kneeling down put his ear to the ground and listened. Then rising up he ran forward some distance and repeated the process. Then he returned with a smile and pointing up a little lateral valley said that he thought we might still find a spring there. We asked him how he arrived at this conclusion, and he replied that he could hear a nightingale singing, and that was always an indication of the proximity of water. I could not hear the note of the bird myself even when listening near the ground, but his nature instinct proved correct, and we followed him till the song rang clear and there close by was a little spring issuing from the rock. As we emerged from the forest we saw the lake lying beneath us, walled in by mountains which on two sides descend in sheer cliffs to the water's edge.

This lake presents a curious phenomenon. Twice during the last century the basin has been drained and twice the lake rose again. When Pausanias visited the spot the plain was dry and the waters of the inflowing streams were carried off to join the Ladon through two chasms in the rock, called *Zerethra* in the old Arcadian tongue. Tradition described these passages as well as a canal, conveying the water to them, as the handiwork of Heracles. Strabo refers to an obstruction due to earthquake which

had arrested the subterranean flow of water into the Ladon, and quotes Eratosthenes as having stated that the flooding of the sacred area at Olympia by the Alphoeus was caused by the sudden release of the lake at Pheneos, which was drained dry. When Colonel Leake visited the spot in 1806, there was no lake, only some marshy areas, and he was able to observe the passage of the river through the channels, which are now known as *Katabothra*. The lake reappeared in 1821. In 1832, the passage became clear once more and the inundation of Olympia was repeated. At the time of our visit about half the plain of the valley was under water and the position of the *Katabothra* was clearly indicated by the eddies formed where the water sank. There are several instances of such natural tunnels draining the waters of mountainous hollows in Greece.

Skirting the low ridges on which the village of Pheneos stood, at that time some three miles from the edge of the lake, we descended into a narrow valley, planted with cypresses and quince trees in avenue which opened into a small green amphitheatre of wooded hills, dominated by the rocky wall of Turtovana. The surrounding slopes were covered with fir and chestnut. There were grassy meadows and patches of shoulder-high fern. A number of little streams coursed through clumps of maple, plane, oak and willow. On a wooded projection of hill, deep bowered in trees stood the monastery of St. George, a square block with wooden galleries supported on beams of timber running all round it. These galleries and the red-tiled roofs and the arched bell-tower were all that was visible above the wealth of greenery. A chorus of nightingales was singing the evening in, and from the mountain-side faintly came the cuckoo's last call. I have never seen a more ideal spot for seclusion than this, the legendary home of Evander, where he entertained his Trojan guest.

The monastery is among the most picturesque in Greece. A rude stone cloister runs round a little court which is almost filled by the church. Over the stone arches is a wooden



gallery whose supporting timbers, dark and mellowed with age, run up to the red eaves. The monks were all old men, but there were a large number of younger aspirants to the monastic life. Our room opened on to one of the outer galleries. Here the abbot, a very intelligent man, dined with us and contributed a number of luxuries, such as fresh vegetables from his own garden, ewes' milk, cheese, tobacco from the monastery plantations, and a wonderful wine fifteen years old, with a bouquet which I still remember, grown at Nemea, where the monastery had other property. He expatiated on the blessedness of the monastic life, free from responsibilities and worldly cares, but regretted that its votaries were recruited from the illiterate, and that they contributed nothing to learning or education. This was the last night of our expedition, for the next day's march would take us to the shore of the Gulf of Corinth. It had ended appropriately in the happy valley resonant with the insistent chorus of the nightingales. *Et ego in Arcadia vixi.*

About a month later I made a midsummer expedition with my friend the late J. D. Bouchier to Thessaly to explore the curious monasteries of Meteora. Bouchier, who was the correspondent for *The Times* in the Balkans, with his headquarters at Athens, had not yet concentrated all his sympathies on Bulgaria, whose zealous advocate and interpreter to his countrymen he afterwards became. Beginning life as an Eton master, a position for which his great deafness rendered him little suited, after a long career as a judicious and capable journalist, he ended by becoming a national institution at Sofia, where he acquired the entire confidence of the alien people who took him to their heart. He received a public funeral in the famous monastery of Rilo, a symbolic spot to the Bulgarians, who paid him the posthumous honour, almost unique in the case of one who was not the head of a state, of engraving his portrait on the next issue of their postage stamps.

The memory of the interesting journey which we made together, prompts me to testify to the intimate relations which I enjoyed with those eminent representatives of the press which our great journals maintained abroad in the old days. In many cases they were valued personal friends. Such was the venerable Stillman, who tamed squirrels, and looked like Father Time. The extraordinary beauty of Mrs. Stillman was an inspiration to our pre-Raphaelite artists, and an inheritance of ancient Greece. Though an American by birth Stillman, after many adventures as a champion of lost causes, became the correspondent of *The Times* in Rome, and was so employed when I was first stationed there. Such again has been and is Sir Valentine Chirol, at Berlin, and many more in later days, not least of whom were McClure, who acted for *The Times* in Italy, with great knowledge and tact throughout the war, and the eminent medieval historian, William Miller, who represented the *Morning Post*. Men of their calibre, whose opinions carried weight, helped to make our press respected abroad. They did not expect official representatives to disclose the vicissitudes of negotiations in progress or retaliate for a certain inevitable reserve with insinuations of aloofness and incompetence. Personally I have, so far as it has been in my discretion, always talked to the representatives of the press of all countries with great frankness, trusting them fully not to make use of what I had stated to be only for their private ear. Hardly ever was my confidence abused by the journalists of the old school, and in my long experience among Italians, I found them also to be as loyal as my own countrymen. Indeed I can only remember one case in which a correspondent of a foreign paper misused an interview granted on the solicitation of a British compatriot whose good faith had been imposed upon. The delinquent is, or should be, still in prison purging his sentence for communication with enemy agents during the war. I am the more happy to record this testimony, because I think the press and publicists at home have



not always of recent years treated our diplomatists with justice, and have encouraged the politicians, with a somewhat facile and unnecessary criticism, to make whipping-boys of men who are precluded from defending themselves.

On my first journey to Thessaly an escort had been sent to take care of our party. But Bouchier and I, not being possessed of great substance, travelled unaccompanied except by one personal retainer; *Cantabit vacuus!* From the port of Volo, by Pharsalos and Trikala we reached our destination of Calabaka, a frontier garrison full of kilted light infantry, which lies under a great perpendicular ridge of conglomerate rock, belonging to the system of the great range of Pindus. This wall rises to a height of some 600 feet, and through a cleft in it the village of Castraki on a higher root of the mountain is approached. To the north-west of Castraki are the fantastic detached, dolomitic bastions on which are perched the monasteries we had come to visit. Here the Peneius, flowing eastward, issues from the highlands, joined by the torrent of the Miritza, and it washes the feet of the pinnacles of Meteora, which the religious had occupied in the days when sanctity and security alike combined to bring isolation into esteem. Originally there seem to have been twenty-four monasteries or hermitages. Only some seven then remained and not all of those were inhabited. Life in such inaccessible retreats finds few recruits to-day, and the scanty survivors of an old tradition are rapidly dying off.

One only of these monastic refuges, Hagios Stefanos, built on a big island of the ridge which rises behind Calabaka, can be reached by road across a rickety bridge spanning the cleft which divides it from the greater mass. Here we were to spend the night. Arriving rather late in the afternoon we found its iron gate closed and had to wait some time for admittance. At length two monks conducted us through a vaulted tunnel into the buildings, where a wing is reserved for guests. Tradition ascribes its founda-

tion to the Emperor John Cantacuzenos, who ended his days in the cloister towards the close of the fourteenth century. At the time of our visit it only contained three monks with some thirty attendants and lay brothers. As the long fast of the Holy Apostles, which lasts for thirty days, was in progress, we had been careful to bring our own supplies with us. We had also brought our camp beds, a precaution indispensable on such occasions. The room placed at our disposal was clean enough in appearance, but the sleeping accommodation revealed evidence of harbouring the usual unwelcome denizens. Two moderately large dishes were found for us to use as basins. There was a young moon that night which lit the silver band of Peneius. The forms of the mountains grew yet more fantastic in the shadows. Hundreds of feet sheer below us we could see the lights of Calabaka, and faintly we could hear the barking of the dogs, mingled with the nearer hooting of the owls which haunted these bastions of rock.

Early the next morning we set out to visit some of the still occupied monasteries. The first upon our road was dedicated to the Trinity, and stood on the outermost of a series of rock towers detached from the mountain. So sheer were its precipitous sides that it passes understanding to conceive how the first man succeeded in reaching the summit, on which the conventual buildings with their red-tiled roofs now cluster picturesquely. Travellers used of old to be hauled up by a windlass worked from a projecting tower, in a stout net, in which they sat huddled up, spinning round in mid-air. At the time of our visit there was not enough man-power in any of the convents to make such an aerial ascent possible, and we had to have resort to the jointed wooden ladders hanging on the face of the rock. The approach here was first by a fixed ladder leading up to a gallery running along the surface of the rock, with a flimsy wooden balustrade; then up again by a flexible wooden ladder jointed every three rungs. This led up through a vertical tunnel or fissure in the rock to an iron-



studded trap-door. Thence another similar jointed ladder led to a second trap, from which there was a steep path to the summit. Only two or three very old men inhabited the extensive buildings. They seemed very poor and anxious for a small donation. There were two churches; the smaller one had its apse hollowed in the rock, which was decorated with curious frescoes; in the large one is a screen with some really fine carving.

The loftiest of these aerial cloisters are Barlaam and Meteora, which gives the name to the group. The pile on which the former stood seemed partially undermined, and we were shown a place where lightning was said to have passed through the rock in the previous year, removing some blocks of pudding stone. Meteora is reputed to be the oldest foundation of all, dating from about the middle of the fourteenth century. Here there were some fifty or sixty feet of ladder to be climbed, the lower section being fixed, while the flexible upper portion is let down from the summit to meet it. It swings about most uncomfortably at that considerable altitude on the surface of the rock. There was an establishment sufficient to accommodate one hundred monks at Meteora. But only two with one attendant were then left. One of these was eighty-five years old, but he still went up and down the ladders. There were three smaller chapels, one partially excavated in the rock, in addition to the big church, a really fine building with alternate layers of red brick and grey stone. The interior was painted throughout in fresco with the "ghastly glories of saints." A spacious refectory with massive old tables had evidently not been used for years, and there were fine cool vaulted wine-cellars. Masses of building with wooden galleries falling into decay occupied the extensive precincts, where there was ample room for gardens had there been any soil on the rock surface. The monks told us they had had no visitors that year. Such travellers as come to the spot did not care to try the ladders.

Hardly less remarkable than these "mid-air monasteries" are the hermits' cells, like nests of rock pigeons or sand martins in caverns or fissures which honeycomb the neighbouring precipice of cliff. That these have once been inhabited is clear. Some are partially boarded, and from the entrances hang the remains of ropes attached to iron stanchions driven into the stone. Here again the problem of how they were first reached appears insoluble. To what strange modes of life have men not betaken themselves in the pursuit of sanctity?

There is also one massive tower of precipitous rock from the summit of which rises a second smaller square mass, which reaches a higher altitude than any of the inhabited piles. There, we were told by our guide, was a chapel, with a great marble chest to hold the priest's vestments and an inscription to the Emperor Andronicus and his wife, presumably the priest-ridden Andronicus II.

Some weeks later I joined some friends who had chartered a small Greek caique, *St. John the Theologian*, for a sail among the islands. We slept on mattresses on deck in the hot July, and cooked our own meals on a portable stove. Personally, I was only able to remain a week, during which time we succeeded in making Santorin, one of the most remarkable places in the whole archipelago. The island is volcanic, there are two gaps in the ring of the crater into which you sail. In the centre sulphur bubbles up, and small vessels find the sulphurous water invaluable for cleaning their hulls. All round the crater-circle the cliffs rise sheer with rocks of purple and orange, and the depth is everywhere so great that it is practically impossible to anchor. We warped up to some bollards at the foot of the cliffs, whence a stair ascends to the picturesque white town which lines the edge of the ridge. On the outer side the slopes are gradual and terraced for vines. An excellent wine is here made, which, carried to the Laconian port of Monembasia or Malvasia, was exported thence in the Middle Ages to Western Europe, and was



accordingly known as Malvoisie or Malmesey. I caught a steamer from Santorin to Athens.

It is a remarkable feature of the Greek islands, and I have visited a great many, that their habitations are always conspicuously clean and neat, contrasting with the squalor which prevails in so many of the mainland villages. The limewash seems to be constantly renewed and the copper vessels shine with a brightness worthy of Dutch interiors.

Just before I finally left Athens I made an expedition with the American Minister, Colonel Snowden, and Walston, in a small tug steamer which we chartered at Patras, across the gulf and up the Aetolian coast in pursuit of woodcock which gather in great numbers in Greece during the winter. After finding a tolerably sheltered cove in which to anchor our small craft with its one solitary cabin, we were able, by crossing a rocky ridge, to drop into the great plain of the Aspro Potamo (Achelous). There were no villages in sight, and no apparent cultivation. Only a few nomad shepherds living in reed huts made it their winter grazing-ground. It was an absolutely wild and untamed land. There were numbers of plover, duck and wild geese, very difficult to approach. Archaeology had not been in the programme. But one day after a long tramp across the plain we approached an eminence, which was encircled on three sides by the river, and found it crowned by an ancient Hellenic city with magnificent polygonal walls, in which there were two gates with perfect keystone arches, such as are rarely seen in Greece. There were also towers of a later epoch with fine squared Hellenic masonry. The theatre was still tolerably complete, but no column of the temples stood upright. It was the city of Aeneadæ, which had been restored by Philip of Macedon.

At the end of October, 1890, the general elections took place in Greece. There were processions and much talk at the cafés and the street corners. The humour of the crowd was in conspicuous contrast to the violence of the press, and the disposition of the people was generally

good tempered. The followers of Tricoupis adopted the olive for their badge; those of Delyannis, the veteran leader of the opposition, a cord, signifying the bond which was to unite in one block all the anti-Tricoupist elements. Tricoupis, who had been over-confident and had maintained little contact with the provinces, where the imposition of a new tobacco duty was greatly resented, was defeated by a majority of two-thirds. In spite of his inestimable services to his country, democracy concluded that it was time to give the other side an innings. And so the proved incapacity of Delyannis was preferred to a renewal of the mandate so long exercised by a minister of high principle and first-rate ability. In Attica, which might be regarded as representing the enlightenment of the country, Tricoupis carried ten out of thirteen seats. But the very electors who had benefited most by his wise administration went against him almost to a man, at Patras, where the remission of the currant duty had filled their pockets, in the Peloponnesus, which had acquired roads and railways, and in Thessaly, where the farmers had been enabled to buy up their holdings by advances at low rates from Tricoupis' land-banks. His defeat presents a considerable analogy to that of Venizelos at the end of the Great War.

In November the Czarevich arrived in Athens and remained for some days prior to embarking for a tour in India, whither Arthur Hardinge was to accompany him. He seemed an amiable young man, but very subdued and rather colourless. The Russian Legation gave a ball in his honour. The French Minister also proposed to do so. But the Czarevich, pleading that if he went to any other Legation but the Russian all the rest would feel bound to entertain him, excused himself. Montholon, however, had a Franco-Russian demonstration in view, and suppressing the fact that the Czarevich had already declined, invited the King of Greece, emphasizing his anxiety to have the honour of welcoming the Grand Duchess Paul, who was paying a visit to her father. The King, knowing nothing



of what had passed, accepted, whereupon Montholon issued cards announcing that the King and Queen and the Czarevich would deign to do him the honour of attending his ball. The Czarevich was very angry, and said that having already refused he would not go. The Russian Minister, who was besought to intervene, made no secret of his opinion regarding the manner in which his Prince had been treated, but in view of the King's acceptance and for the sake of all concerned persuaded the Czarevich to relent. When the Grand Duchess returned to Russia shortly afterwards, the same representative, as doyen of the diplomatic corps, told some of us not to go to the station to see her off, but was the first to arrive there himself. Such tragic-comic episodes of the old diplomacy were fortunately rare. An over-zealous agent, endeavouring to push the interests of his country at any cost, was almost always found out and did those interests more harm than good.

At the end of the year I received notice of my transfer to Rome, where I was to serve under Lord Dufferin. I had now been rather more than two years in Athens, and was sorry to leave. Not only had my work interested me greatly, but the haunting beauty of that enchanted land, where nature seems to have a quick and conscious soul, had taken a hold upon my affections which has possessed me ever since.

On the eve of my departure at the end of January, 1891, I had a long interview with King George, who took a gloomy view of the situation ensuing on the fall of Tricoupis. He said that during the twenty-eight years of his reign the virulence of political party spirit had grown in intensity, and now each side on coming into power made a point of undoing all that the other side had accomplished. Tricoupis had introduced a test qualification for office. His successors had at once abolished it. Every one in Greece wanted office, and as there were not enough places to satisfy them all, the disappointed candidates would at once create a formidable opposition group. His own position, the King

said, grew more and more difficult. He was expected to drive a coach without holding the reins. Politicians of all colours seemed to aim at depriving the Sovereign of the powers which the constitution accorded him, and without an element of stability such as the crown should present the country could not go on. The army ought, he held, to be independent of the politicians. But Tricoupis had assumed the position of Minister of War and this had led to trouble with the army. Delyannis had protested against the occupation of this Ministry by Tricoupis, but as soon as he came into office had followed his example and taken it over himself. They both, of course, pretended the measure was temporary. The army should be controlled by a non-political commander-in-chief who would stand by the Crown. The Sovereign would not then be compelled to assent to the destructive legislation which a new Minister always initiated.

Nevertheless, only a year after this conversation the King did assert his prerogative and dismissed Delyannis, in spite of his having a majority in the Chamber, gaining thereby general approval in the country. Subsequent experience, moreover, has shown that the Sovereign in Greece can readily find means at his disposal to control the political situation. Whether this is desirable or not is another question. It is arguable that Greece might be a happier country if governed autocratically. But as a constitution and a Parliament exist, it would seem more logical that the King should be altogether outside politics. Tricoupis, the King added, was a man of great ideas, who might be pardoned all his mistakes. But he had the defects of his qualities. He was now formulating a new programme, which included a permanent civil service, the independence of the judiciary, etc. All these propositions were sound. But why had he not introduced them while in office, as he had been urged to do? He had wanted first of all to create a party, which was a mania with politicians. As a matter of fact, he had created a void round himself. His party



was worthless, and while he was looking after the big things his colleagues had let the little things which mattered go to the devil.

On the other hand, the King said that while he could not but take a pessimistic view of the conditions prevailing at the moment, he must admit that great material progress had been made since his arrival in Greece. Even the sinister effects of party spirit only reacted on political groups and on Parliament, whereas in the reign of his predecessor it had been responsible for popular revolutionary outbreaks regularly twice a year. It was the misfortune of the Greek people that they were too clever and quick-brained. They had started at the opposite pole from most nations, whose evolution proceeded from submission to gradual emancipation. The Greeks, from the first moment of their independence, had known neither tradition nor restraint nor reverence, and they had got to learn national discipline.

The Greek people owed a great debt to King George, who had handled many difficult situations with tact and adroitness. His family influence in the councils of Europe had often stood them in good stead. He had great personal charm and was deservedly popular in Athens, and not least so when he asserted himself. Had he travelled more often and more extensively in his dominions and made himself better known to his subjects in remoter provinces he would have been idolized, and might have exercised a still greater influence in public affairs. The Greek is democratic and monarchical at the same time, and feels a personal interest in his Sovereign. King George lived to see his little country grow into the greater Greece, and it was a dark day for all its well-wishers when the hand of an assassin at Salonika terminated his valuable life.

After the disappearance of Tricoupis and the removal of the strong hand we were at once confronted at the Legation with claims and protests which had rarely been lodged under the preceding Government. The abolition of his qualification test for office had opened administrative posts

to inexperience and incompetence. A procedure disastrous for foreign enterprise was the appointment by favour of administrators in bankruptcy. In a case in which a friend of mine was a creditor, an adjudicator was named who had himself been a bankrupt three years before and had never paid any dividend. Such an adjudicator would, by agreement with the debtor, write himself down as the chief creditor. The composition would be thus so diminished by fictitious debts that the smaller creditors obtained practically nothing. Those who have only lived in countries enjoying a long tradition of order and method have little idea of the difficulties which commercial enterprise in new countries often has to encounter, or of the many devices resorted to in order to render abortive a protection which the judicial system appears to guarantee. I was sorry to leave my chief with a number of such troublesome problems on hand. But the devices of the politician who has constituents to appease leave much to be desired in other countries also.

In taking leave of their fascinating country I wish to say that the Greeks have, in my opinion, suffered very unfairly from the hasty judgments passed by those who only know the Greek-speaking long-shore adventurer of Levantine ports. There is often little Greek about the latter beyond the language which he speaks, and it would be difficult to trace the origin of much of the mixed blood which the vicissitudes of the story of the East has thrown up on those shores. The Greek countryman of the mountain villages and the Greek islander is an attractive personality, with the sympathetic virtues of endurance, abstinence and hospitality. A British naval officer who has commanded the Greek Navy told me that he considered there was no finer material for a sailor's life than the Greek islander. The rank and file were admirable, good tempered, hard working and scrupulously clean. The Greek has the defects of his qualities, and the very quickness of his brain does not conduce to stability. But when we reflect on



what were the conditions prevailing in Greece in the eighteenth century, and that she has only one century of national life behind her as an independent country, we cannot fail to admit that there is a great balance on the credit side.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ROME AND PARIS, 1891-1892

On leaving Athens I spent a short time at the Embassy at Constantinople, which was white with snow when I arrived there at the end of January, 1891. Under our very able Ambassador, Sir William White, our position in Turkey, which various episodes before long contributed cumulatively to undermine, was still a very strong one. Living in the Secretary's quarters at Pera, I had the advantage of several interesting conversations with him. He had a marvellous fund of interesting information and certainly knew his own mind, expressing his opinion in unequivocal terms, with a sonorous and emphatic "My dear Sir," which implied that he was telling you and not arguing with you. He told me of the concluding phase in the story of Prince Alexander of Battenberg, whose supposed matrimonial ambitions have been referred to as occasioning so much uneasiness at Berlin. After finally relinquishing the Bulgarian throne, he had in due course requested permission to enter the Austrian army. An evasive reply was returned until his application had been referred to Berlin. The view there held was that his reception in the Austrian army would be regarded as inopportune so long as he remained unmarried. He was also directly reminded by the Grand Duke of Hesse that he was a stumbling-block to the family while still a possible suitor for a certain alliance. He took the hint and married, whereupon he was at once admitted into the Austrian army.

After my recent sojourn in Greece I was greatly interested to see in the Museum at Stamboul the splendid sarcophag



from Sidon, then a comparatively recent archaeological discovery. It impressed me as a curious psychological point that works of such delicacy and exquisite workmanship should not only have been consigned to an underground tomb, but even there placed in niches where any who might have descended into the sepulchral chamber could only have seen one of the four sculptured sides. Was there among the Asiatic Greeks, as in Egypt, a sense of obligation to the dead for whom, and not for the living, their surroundings were made beautiful in the place of interment? In Greece the appeal of monuments is to the survivors. Robbers seeking plunder had savagely mutilated these great works of art, in Roman times it would seem, to judge from the type of the terra-cotta lamps found lying beside them. Hamdi Bey, the director of antiquities, explained to me the difficulty with which he had been confronted in withdrawing the sarcophagi from their niches owing to the number of broken pieces, the removal of which, without fretting the edges, was a serious problem. He adopted the expedient of driving cobbler's wooden pegs into the cracks, which when wetted swelled and widened the apertures until he was able to separate the pieces without abrasion. The process was similar to that employed by the Egyptians to split off their obelisks from the granite rock with box-wood blocks inserted into a series of oblong holes drilled for the purpose.

At Sofia I spent a day or two with my old colleague of Berlin, Charles Hardinge (Lord Hardinge of Penshurst), who was in charge of the Legation. Graves, the Consul at Philippolis, travelled part of the way with me. We were in a quite empty corridor carriage. A rat, apparently seeking a refuge from the light, entered our compartment and ran up the inside of his trouser-leg. It was stopped at the knee and escaped, and a rat-hunt through the whole of the corridor did not result in a kill.

It was bitterly cold at Sofia. The winter of 1891 was an exceptionally severe one and wolves prowled about in

the outskirts of the city. Little more than ten years had passed since Bulgaria had become an autonomous principality. Its development had progressed on sound lines, and the new state was not trying to run before it could walk. Good roads and national education had been the first care, and the nation co-operated readily for public ends. These were the days of Stambouloff's energetic and autocratic *régime*, and of his great struggle for emancipation from Russian tutelage. He had been educated for the priesthood at Odessa, but had had to leave the college after shooting at the principal. Russia had liberally subventioned the church in Bulgaria which became generally Russophil. But Stambouloff forcibly closed the Synod and sent the bishops packing. Then, by his successful ecclesiastical policy in Macedonia, he gradually regained the sympathy of the clergy. He confessed that his great mistake had been allowing Prince Alexander to leave the country, and his not having detained him, if need be by force, until the popular excitement aroused by the kidnapping had died down and till the Prince had recovered his nerve. The army at large was devoted to him, and though a number of the officers had been bought, the plot for his removal had only succeeded by an unlucky chance. Russia, in seeking to maintain a hold on the principality, made nothing but mistakes. The Russian Government had just demanded the expulsion from Bulgaria of certain Russian subjects on the plea that they were Nihilists, and this request provided Stambouloff with the opportunity which he had long been seeking of expelling a number of obnoxious persons whom he had till then been afraid to touch. Prince Ferdinand, regarded by St. Petersburg as an usurper, had not yet been recognized by the Powers, which was probably convenient, as Russia had no pretext for trying to upset him. That most astute of Princes well understood how to bide his time, and for the moment gave Stambouloff *carte blanche*. But the duel between the two was not long delayed. A few years later,



after the fall of Stambouloff, my friend Harry Cust, while editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, made a journalistic progress through the Balkans. He was cordially received by the Prince, who expounded his views and policy. Towards the close of the interview—Cust is my witness—as they were standing in the window, Ferdinand exclaimed, “Enfin, quel triste pays ! Et moi j'en suis le Prince.” Harry Cust observed that in the afternoon he contemplated paying a visit to Stambouloff, who was then in violent opposition. “No, no,” said the Prince, “I must beg you not to do that after having been to see me.” Harry explained that it was his business as a journalist to see every one, whatever views they held. “No doubt,” Ferdinand rejoined, “but this is not a man whom you can properly see. I am not very particular myself, but one must draw the line somewhere.” Nevertheless, in the afternoon he did visit the ex-prime-minister, and in the course of conversation remarked that apparently he was not on the best of terms with the Prince. “Why, no,” said Stambouloff, “I am not. How could I be ! I am not very particular myself, but one must draw the line somewhere !” I can, of course, take no responsibility for this story, beyond admitting that I have slightly attenuated the terms in which these reciprocal appreciations were repeated to me.

From Sofia I went on to Pesth. Buda had character, but Pesth, with its wide streets and palatial houses, was all of yesterday, and in spite of the kind hospitality of our diplomatic representative, Sir Arthur Nicolson (Lord Carnock), and a long and interesting conversation with Arminius Vambéry (Hermann Weinberger), I was disappointed with my visit. At that time the Magyarization of the Hungarian dependencies was being vigorously enforced. The Magnate was still all-powerful, and for practical purposes was outside the law. The State was everything, and the State meant only the Magyar. The Hungarian language was being imposed on unwilling tongues, and the Slav populations were silently nursing their dis-

content. While at Pesth I had made the acquaintance of the deputy Pulsky, and we travelled together a considerable distance on the way to Berlin. He expounded to me the Hungarian point of view.

The nationality movement was, he maintained, for the moment necessary and indeed inevitable. There was in his own country a close analogy to the England described by Fielding and Smollet. The Great Britain of to-day was a century and more in advance of Hungary in development, and had passed beyond the national phase, which only survived in Ireland. France had also left the acute national struggle behind, and in Germany racial rivalries were settling down under the hegemony of Prussia. In Hungary, the national issue was at its height. It was a stage through which all countries were bound to pass, and its existence was in itself an indication of progress. Men of political sagacity accepted it as such. But inasmuch as all the various nationalities in the Austro-Hungarian empire were asserting themselves, the Hungarians had determined to be the predominant element, and to fix the type of national character which was to prevail when the phase of turmoil quieted down. The smaller Slav communities would have to accept the impress of the Magyar, who was too individual and whose temperament was too strongly marked to be influenced by others. Hence, as the Magyars now controlled the State, it was their policy to bring everything under State control. He did not himself believe that the Magyar movement would have the effect of rendering the Slav element in Hungary subject to Russian influence.

Pesth had, he said, changed enormously in the last fifteen years, and was in a state of transition. People had not yet been able to accustom themselves to the hours and mode of life prevailing elsewhere. Dinner in the hotels was still at four o'clock. The old semi-barbaric hospitality no longer existed, and at present there was little or no social life. Tisza, who had been premier over a long series of years, had never entertained anyone in his house. The



ladies of the aristocracy were very ultramontane and little addicted to distraction. The only social intercourse was in the clubs. Gradually no doubt the conditions prevailing in other European capitals would establish themselves there also.

There was, in 1891, some justification for the previsions and aims of the Hungarians. But, unfortunately for that virile and sympathetic people, their fate was indissolubly linked by tradition and geographical position to a system which had outlived its day and which could only maintain a precarious existence by making common cause with dominance and aggression.

At Berlin I received a cordial welcome from old friends. The Malets were absent in England. The Empress Frederick, whom I saw on the day of my arrival, was about to start for Paris. An invitation had been sent to French artists to exhibit at Berlin in the coming spring, and a special compliment had been conveyed to Meissonier. It was apparently hoped that the way might be paved for an eventual visit of the Emperor to France. Two years had brought about great changes in the capital, and socially a transitional stage was appreciable. The old stars which had shone under the former court had set. The new people did not yet seem sure of their position. The ex-Chancellor, in his retirement, inspired a constant flow of criticism which exasperated the Emperor. The Bismarckians still remained a powerful factor and, while the majority had gone over to the rising sun, an influential group gathered round my friend, Count Guido Henckel v. Donnersmarck, who declined to renounce an old allegiance, and was in consequence severely boycotted by the Court. Some five years later a reconciliation took place, and Donnersmarck became a Prince.

Two and a half years had passed since I had left England. A few days after my arrival I spent the week at Aston Clinton, and on the Sunday we walked over to Tring to Lord Rothschild's, where Mr. Gladstone was staying. I

found him much aged since I had last seen him, but intellectually as active as ever, and we had a long talk about Greece. He was familiar with even so little known a book as Hahn's *Albanian Studies*. A few weeks later I met him again at a dinner party. He talked to me for the whole of the time available after we had rejoined the ladies about Schliemann's discoveries, about Greece and the other Balkan States, and he was good enough to be very complimentary about a poem which I had written for the Tercentenary of the Armada. "We seldom," he remarked, "read modern poetry on impulse; we generally do so only because we are asked to. But this I have read again and again."

With the cigarettes the Channel Tunnel had come up for discussion, and out of the eight men present, whether for sentimental or other reasons, only one besides Mr. Gladstone himself had not been opposed to the project. When asked whether he was not impressed by this consensus of opinion—the guests included George Russell, Knowles, of the *Nineteenth Century*, and Munro Ferguson—he replied with a story. There was a certain man in America who was notorious for the peculiar vehemence of his language, he used almost "to burst himself in swearing." One day he had been dragging his cart and horse up a steep hill with a load of salt. A practical joker had surreptitiously tilted up the back-board of the cart, and the escaping salt had made a white track up the hill. On arriving at the top he looked back and realized that the cart was empty. His face contracted for a great effort, but suddenly his lips relaxed and he said with a sigh: "No! I'm not equal to it." "Well that," said Mr. Gladstone, chuckling, "is approximately my attitude towards you, gentlemen."

At Windsor, whither I was commanded to dine and sleep, the Empress Frederick was staying. The visit to Paris had ended disastrously. An inopportune expedition to Versailles had given the Déroulèdes their opportunity to beat the chauvinistic drum and invoke a popular protest.



Both the Empress herself and our Ambassador, Lord Lytton, whom I saw a few days later, attributed the unfortunate result to Münster's passion for driving. The Empress had never intended to go to Versailles, but Münster made a great point of taking her there in his coach, and had over-persuaded her. There was, however, good ground for his assuming that the authorities had no objection to the visit. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, when consulted by the German Ambassador, had said that all the Museums were at Her Majesty's disposal, and that if she wished to go to Versailles it would be best to do so on a Monday, the day on which the general public were not admitted, when special arrangements could be made. Münster had regarded this as equivalent to an invitation. It must, however, be admitted that on an occasion which courted criticism from the irreconcilables a visit to Versailles was far from tactful, and as a consequence the much-discussed journey to Paris only served to embitter relations.

A few days later I was invited by the Prince of Wales to meet the Empress again at Sandringham. Lord Leighton, who came down on Sunday, was responsible for the following anecdote of Dizzy. During the brief period when Waddington held the post of Minister for Foreign Affairs, there was an abortive attempt on his life. When Beaconsfield learned that the incident had had no sinister result, his only comment was: "That is well. He would have made assassination ridiculous." A pretext for a new attack on the Empress had been found at this time in the admission of the Crown Princess of Greece to the Orthodox Church. She was charged with having neglected to give her children a religious education. Her own view had been that no religion was of great value which individuals did not think out for themselves and then deliberately adopt. She had, therefore, encouraged an open mind in such issues. The adoption by her daughter of the Orthodox religion had come as somewhat of a surprise to herself.

England seemed more than ever delightful after a long

absence. The thronging life of London in the season was as interesting as ever, and the stately country houses still dispensed the large hospitality of the old order, and assembled the social, political and intellectual world in memorable gatherings. But for the shadow of a personal loss which clouded my life at this time I should have enjoyed myself. As it was, I was ready to leave for my new post. Before starting I was entertained at a dinner remarkable for brilliant sallies of unconventional oratory by my friends Curzon, George Wyndham, Harry Cust, Godfrey Webb, G. Leveson-Gower and several more. This was, I think, the last of a series of such banquets to which the present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs convened us. The flow of wit was brilliant and unrestrained. George Wyndham was at his best, and a very good best it was on such occasions. Cust was quick as lightning in quip and repartee. Webb had a genial gift for ribald epigram. Those who have only known Lord Curzon in an official capacity would hardly credit him with the Rabelaisian humour and the inventive spirit of mischief which he displayed, *consule Planco*. And once when the immortal Henley was too ill to come himself he sent us for our delectation a poem in the manner of Wordsworth which, though it will never be published, I am inclined to place among his masterpieces.

The Roman season was over when I reached the Embassy. But Parliament was still sitting, and I shortly afterwards witnessed on a Sunday afternoon what was then reported to be the first display of personal violence in the Chamber at Montecitorio. I have seen several since, and in this respect even the Mother of Parliaments has not been exempt. The Rudini Government, which had succeeded that of Crispi early in 1891, were sure of their majority on an interpellation regarding foreign policy, but the opposition had on the previous day obstructed all progress by sheer force of lungs. On the Sunday they were led by Felice Cavallotti, poet, dramatist and advocate of friendship with France, into actual battle, and a hot skirmish took place



in the arena of the house. The protagonists were taken out into the corridors by their friends to cool down. After a considerable pause the President returned. Veterans of the War of Independence made an appeal to the spirit of patriotism and antagonists embraced with emotion. The fiery Cavalotti, who fell in a duel with the editor of a Conservative newspaper in 1898, was in spite of, rather than because of, his anti-monarchical attitude a popular figure as leader of the extreme left in Italian public life.

The city had changed in aspect tragically, from the picturesque and sentimental point of view, from the Rome of my boyhood, when the Via Nazionale had not yet been conceived, when Santa Maria Maggiore was isolated in a sort of suburb of its own on the Esquiline, and when only villas and gardens were to be found east of the Piazza Barberini. But even in 1891 there were solitary places beside the Aurelian walls, and beyond the gates it did not take long to reach that open grass country bounded by the opal hills, with its haunting spiritual beauty which no other region of the world presents. But to the everlasting lament of the older lovers of Rome it may justly be answered that the historic city has always been in continuous stages of transformation since republican and imperial days. Each century in series has seen old landmarks disappear and new buildings arise. And always enough is left over from each successive phase to carry on tradition and make the streets of Rome an epitome of the story of the world.

The Ambassador and his family left the Embassy with the commencement of summer for the Bay of Naples or on leave at home, and I saw little of my new chief till the autumn. I remained in Rome, where I have lived through many summers since, with the exception of a few days spent at Sorrento with the Marion Crawfords. I found him much changed since his marriage with a daughter of the well-known military inventor, General Berdan. He was less cynical and self-assertive. Success had made him a kindlier critic, and he was extremely modest about his

own accomplishment. Crawford had, in fact, taken up literature rather by accident, and he had a way of saying what was in a sense true, that he was not really a literary man. But he was a man of remarkable capacity and an admirable linguist. During his rolling-stone period he had absorbed a great deal of knowledge. He was deeply read in philosophy, and at the same time was something of a mystic with a curious leaning to astrology. But he was a man of moods, and in later years there was a recidivist tendency to the old intolerance. Even then at moments his incontrollable spirit broke out. One night we had returned very late with Mrs. Crawford and some other ladies from a picnic in an undecked fellucca, which he sailed with great skill. The moon was bright over the gulf, but beyond the shelter of the cliffs it was blowing hard and clouds were gathering. We had just landed the ladies towards midnight when a sudden impulse prompted Crawford to propose sailing to Capri. His experienced boatmen who knew their own seas protested; they had families dependent on them and the passage could not be attempted in an open boat. This roused his demon of opposition, and he denounced their lack of courage. Seeing that argument was useless, I said I would go with him, and we put out again about midnight. Beyond the shelter of the bay every bit of canvas had to come down at once. We took to the oars and the boat was kept with its head to the seas. I foresaw catastrophe and reflected on the obituary notices. Crawford managed the boat well enough, but he had been up at dawn, and I was not sorry to see sleep overpowering him, whereupon he relinquished the rudder to one of his boatmen and resigned himself. We steered for a little creek half-way to the end of the peninsula and found shelter under the lee of the rocks till morning broke and wind and sea abated, when we were able to run across to Capri, to bathe, breakfast and telegraph to Sorrento.

Lord Dufferin was spending his leisure sailing a little cutter, which he used for the most part to navigate alone



fearlessly after his kind. He was seen one day in the middle of the Bay of Naples in a roughish sea hanging on to the end of his bowsprit, which dipped to the water and half immersed him with the pitching of the boat. Something had gone wrong with his jib tackle, and he had lashed his helm and climbed out to clear it himself. He almost resented the offer of assistance from the passing craft. This most universal of men was a master of watermanship. He said he had often found it useful, when Ambassador at Constantinople and threatened with awkward questions by the Porte, temporarily to sever communications by disappearing into the Marmora in his little yacht.

Some interesting visitors came to Rome that summer and autumn. J. H. Middleton, who was afterwards director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, spent some time there completing his admirable book on the *Remains of Ancient Rome*. I had known him in former days as a rather formidable and intolerant type of positivist. But now he had greatly softened, perhaps with marriage, and had all the gentleness and tolerance of wisdom. There were few experiences which were not included in his record. He had studied at the Arab University in Morocco, and had spent several weeks in a Turkish prison at Aleppo. It fell out thus. At that time he was contemplating a journey overland to Bagdad, and had received the necessary passports from Constantinople. But the local Pasha insisted that his own *visa* was also necessary, and demanded a hundred pounds as a fee for affixing it. Middleton declined to pay, and to ensure that he should not start without the *visa* he was consigned to the castle as a prisoner. A reasonable sojourn there would, Middleton concluded, enable him to recover his Arabic, so he held out for three weeks. The prison allowance amounted to only about a penny a day. The prisoners pooled their money and bought bread and black olives on which they lived, supplementing their resources by begging with a basket let down from one of the castle towers, into which the charitable threw small

coins. With these they were able to buy a little tobacco. After three weeks or so, when he had had enough of the life, he compounded with the Governor for fifty pounds and proceeded on his way. He had never raised the question of his detention officially, and regarded it as a not unprofitable adventure. I remember one evening, in a little restaurant we put the question to him whether in his large eastern experience he had ever seen a man crucified. Middleton answered quite seriously, after some reflection: "No. But I have seen a man impaled."

John Addington Symonds also came in the autumn. He was then at work on a life of Michelangelo, and claimed to be able to establish that the famous sonnets were not really addresses to Vittoria Colonna, but were composed rather in a neo-classic spirit in accordance with the fashion of the day. Sitting in my rooms at the Embassy he talked with his usual brilliancy late into the night of the curious post-Elizabethan development of the Italianate Englishman, and of the group of dramatists who wrote for the travelled few, fascinated by the romance and licence of seventeenth century conditions in Italy. Vittoria Accoramboni and some of Marston's plays were conceived almost immediately after the occurrence of the events with which they dealt. The imported laxity of morals and deterioration of social standards in the English aristocracy was illustrated by the combination of infamies which led to the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury in 1613, and it was one of the justifications for the Puritan movement. Symonds also enlightened me as to the practice, prevailing in Rome and perhaps other great cities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, of charging a member of the household, when the great families retired to their villas in the summer, to draw up for them budgets of news and to report scandals in the capital. These *relazioni*, which anticipated the social journals of our time and had nothing to fear from libel actions, were important historical documents in so far as they gave a picture of contemporary public morals. Webster had



obtained possession of several. Such a record had probably been the document which supplied Browning with the material for the "Ring and the Book." An Italian lawyer of my acquaintance, whom a humble client presented with some old books in lieu of a fee, had found among them a manuscript of this nature from which I derived much entertainment, as it contained a complete *chronique scandaleuse* of the relations between Innocent X and his sister-in-law, Olympia Maldachini Pamfilj, who was known as the *Papessa*.

A little later the "Bart," as we used to call my old friend Sir Charles Tennant, with Lady Tennant and Miss Margot, spent a day or two in Rome. Together with Harry Cust, who had been staying with me, I accompanied them to Naples, where they were to embark for Egypt. Tricoupis also passed twice through Rome in an optimistic mood and confident of his country's future. But unfortunately for Greece that great statesman's days were numbered and he died prematurely in 1896. Nor was the capital by any means abandoned in the summer. Waldo Story, the sculptor, remained late, having work on hand to finish, and initiated me into all the best taverns where dinner was served in the open air. Giacomo Boni, who was making his monumental discoveries in the Forum, did not relax his vigilance over every spadeful of earth that was lifted, and with him then began a friendship which has never waned. Axel Munthe, the mysterious Swede, with his genius for literary expression in a foreign tongue, moved backwards and forwards between his tower in Capri and the apartment in which John Keats had breathed his last in Rome. He inspired warm friendships and bitter enmities. I unhesitatingly joined the category of his friends, among whom I hope always to be numbered.

For us who were accredited to the Quirinal it was not easy in those days to penetrate into the Black world. The dividing line was still strongly emphasized. But I soon became intimate with the able and witty Father Hickey, then rector of the Irish Dominican college at San Clemente,

who ended his days as Provincial of the Dominicans in Ireland. He was very hospitable, but unfortunately for so brilliant a talker the rules of his order prescribed silence at meals, unless a bishop were present who could grant exemption. Not unfrequently I received a little note in pencil: "Come and dine to-morrow, I've got a bishop." The college had summer quarters and vineyards at Tivoli and Father Hickey was very proud of his wine. Once when I had gone there to spend the afternoon, as we were sitting under the pergola after dinner, a spirit of mischief entered into me and I began to chaff the rector about his system of education, which I maintained was utterly wrong. He had to train the future preachers, who are drawn chiefly from the Dominicans. I argued that his pupils should learn all about modern discovery and science, so as to know what they had to contend against. Instead of that they spent some seven years absorbing the lives and theology of the Fathers of the Church. "Me dear young friend," said Father Hickey, "you know nothing of what you are talking about. There are certain matters which have been laid down by the Church as immutable and it would be a mere waste of time for these boys to be investigating the bases of what has been settled once for all. It would be just as if one of them were to come to me and say: 'Father, I have reason to think that everybody is wrong about the earth's motion, and that it's the sun that goes round the earth and not the earth that goes round the sun.' I should say to him: 'Leave that alone, me dear boy, it has been determined long ago by those who are much more competent than you are.'"—"Hullo, Father," said I, "and how about Galileo?"—"Ah, well, you had me there!" was his reply, and he changed the subject.

One day I took Lady Claud Hamilton, who was then at the height of her beauty and charm, to see San Clemente, and the Rector did the honours of the lower church and the temple of Mithras, which had not yet then been invaded by the subterranean water which made it inaccessible for so many years. He was delighted with his visitor, and



interrupted our good-byes with "You cannot go until you have tasted me wine. I have a wonderful *Aleatico* this year." (It was the first juice drawn from the grapes before the press had operated.) But the problem was where to enjoy this nectar of the Sabines, for an inexorable rule forbade a lady to cross the monastic threshold. "I know," said Father Hickey, "we'll have it in the Sacristy." And so we did.

During my long residence in Rome and especially at a later period I have been on terms of intimacy with not a few eminent ecclesiastics. But by none of these was a word ever addressed to me which concerned the conscience or suggested any desire to proselytize. More than one of my younger colleagues and friends fell under influences to which they were probably predisposed. But in my own case no advantage was taken of ample opportunity. I have, therefore, always assumed that those whose vocation it must be to gather as many sheep as possible into the fold have some intuitive gift of diagnosis which enables them to distinguish the susceptible from the temperamentally recalcitrant.

The tension between clericals and anti-clericals, combined with the somewhat acute phase in Franco-Italian relations resulting from the anti-French orientation of Crispi's policy came to a head in 1891 owing to an unfortunate incident at the Pantheon, which was the signal for riots and demonstrations. At the tomb of Victor Emmanuel II in that church a register is kept in which visitors inscribe their names. A French pilgrimage was in progress, and a young French student very foolishly wrote "Vive le Pape" in the book. The group to which he belonged were with difficulty saved by the police from being lynched, and the city was at once in an uproar. The pilgrims were severely hustled; rabid orators mounted on the altars in the Pantheon and made violent appeals to the masses; and bands promenaded the streets playing Garibaldi's war hymn. Fortunately no international episode arose. But both

parties made use of the episode for their own ends, the extreme Radicals calling for the expulsion of the Pope from Rome, while the clericals asserted that the attitude of the mob had revealed what might be expected if the Pontiff were to leave the precincts of the Apostolic palace.

Episodes of this nature do not of course affect the general attitude of the Vatican. But as a coincidence it was curious that about this time, a new orientation in the policy of Leo XIII became more pronounced. The church seemed inclined to range itself more and more on the side of the people against privilege and traditional authority. It is possible that the influence of the British and American bishops had not been without its effect. It seemed as though the Church had realized that the arbitrage of human affairs was passing more and more into the hands of the people and that therefore their goodwill was more important to her than that of the old dominant factors. An evident bid was made for popular support in France. Later on in the following year when I was in Paris a distinguished ecclesiastic, the Abbé Garnier, at a Catholic congress at Roubaix, openly avowed the republican leanings of the Pope. "We accept the republic," he said, "in conformity with the instructions of Leo XIII. We have boarded the train, but we mean to direct it. We have entered the house, but we mean to cleanse it." On the other hand a leader of the royalist party, the Comte d'Haussonville, in discussing about the same time these republican velleities, pronounced in favour of absolute docility in matters of faith, but held the dominion of citizenship and honour to be excluded from the sphere of ecclesiastical interference.

In the late autumn the Dufferins returned to Rome, and my new chief at once took me into his confidence. He was engaged in editing his mother's poems and invited my co-operation in various minor points for revision. That most delightful of men was an ideal representative who as a diplomatist more than atoned by his personal charm, his tact, his judgment and resource for his linguistic deficiencies



He had amused himself with a study of Persian. But his French was elementary. When he was appointed to Paris he set diligently to work and committed to memory every irregular gender. But an impeccable accuracy in genders does not imply facility in expression. Dufferin's finished and courtly manners never left any doubt of the rigid determination which lay behind it and no one could administer a necessary rebuff with more unerring effect. Not long after his arrival in Rome he had paid a visit by appointment to Crispi, who was then in power. Crispi, who was a rough diamond, did not rise from the table at which he was writing, as all the laws of etiquette demanded, when the Ambassador was ushered into his room. He merely asked him in a preoccupied manner to sit down. Lord Dufferin remained standing in an attitude of expectancy. Crispi repeated the invitation to sit down, but the Ambassador did not move. Then the veteran realized that he was at fault, rose from his table and advanced with extended hand, whereupon Dufferin at once took the indicated chair.

There was for a brief moment in our archives the draft of a most crushing letter addressed to a lady who was visiting Rome and who without any introduction had forced herself into the presence of the Ambassadress and had rather aggressively demanded why she and her daughter had not been invited to a party to be given at the Embassy, notwithstanding that she had left a card. The letter began with an expression of regret that she had made it necessary for her name to be removed from the Ambassadress' visiting list. It went on to explain the obligations of Ambassadors in the matter of hospitality, which were in the first place towards the people of the country where they were accredited, but which might at discretion be extended to friends and acquaintances among their own countrymen, who had been presented or recommended to them. This was the limit of their obligation. Nevertheless, the rebuke having been administered and an apology received, the writer was invited on another occasion, and the draft of the letter,

which might have served as a valuable model, was destroyed.

His adroitness of resource even in trivial matters was illustrated by a little incident which he related to me himself. The daughter of a Scotch Earl who had married an American gentleman residing in Rome was anxious to be presented at the Quirinal and had to address her request to the American Ambassador. As an earl's daughter she had always been known in Rome by her courtesy title. But the Ambassador explained that he could only send in her name to the Court as Mrs. ——. This greatly upset her father. The American Ambassador discussed the grave situation with Dufferin, explaining that while personally he would be delighted to use the courtesy title, his doing so would not escape notice, as by marriage the lady had become an American citizen and he would have no excuse to offer. Dufferin then asked him in what language he generally addressed the Chamberlain, and he replied that he always wrote in English.—“Why not,” suggested Dufferin, “on this occasion write in Italian? You can, of course, describe her as *Donna*, for in any case she is a lady, and there is no reason why you should not insert her christian name. The responsibility for interpreting the name will be left to the Court officials. You will be quite safe, and if they use the form of address by which she is generally known here everyone will be satisfied.”

Death was busy in the concluding quarter of that year. W. H. Smith, the typical exponent of well-balanced common sense in British political life, passed away in October, with Parnell, Balmaceda and Boulanger, who had all embarked on great adventures. Lord Lytton died in November. He had just written to Lord Dufferin to say that much as he loved him he had no intention of making a vacancy for him. Quite at the end of the year Sir William White succumbed to heart weakness after influenza at Berlin, two days after his arrival to spend Christmas there.

Lord Dufferin was offered the vacant post at Paris. I deciphered the private telegram for him. After con-



sulting his family he accepted, but he confessed to me that he was most reluctant to leave Rome. He quoted the story of some famous character who had been asked what life he would have wished to live had he been free to choose. His estimate of the ideal life was from twenty to twenty-five to be a reigning beauty; from twenty-five to thirty-five a successful French General; from thirty-five to fifty a wealthy English nobleman; and the rest of life a Roman cardinal. As he could not be the last, Dufferin said he would like to have remained the next best thing, an Ambassador in Rome. We then composed a letter to King Humbert, in which these regrets were expressed with acknowledgments for many gracious acts of kindness. Then after dinner he invited me to accompany him to Paris, if he could obtain the agreement of the Foreign Office to my doing so. I had been looking forward to spending two or three years in Rome, but could not of course do otherwise than accept such a proposal, which was the more gratifying because I had only been working for quite a short time under the Ambassador's direct supervision. He was in any case to remain in Italy two or three months longer. I was in due course instructed to proceed to Paris in the following May or June.

About this time I found myself involved in a further incident connected with the cemetery at Testaccio. On this occasion it was not the grave of Keats but that of Shelley which was endangered. Lady Shelley, the widow of the poet's only surviving son, had proposed to replace the plain marble slab which covers his ashes in the tower of the Aurelian wall by an elaborate monumental work, executed by Onslow Ford. Objection was taken to any change by Mrs. Call, the niece and representative of Trelawny, who had acquired the ground and had provided for the burial of his own ashes by those of his friend. Lady Shelley had appealed to the Ambassador, who, after discussing the matter with me and fully accepting my view, left it to my discretion to deal with. I accordingly wrote to my old

friend Lady Shelley and urged upon her that, apart from any question of the proprietary claim to the site, there seemed to be no question that the course proposed was inopportune. The flat marble slab bedded in the acanthus foliage in the ruined tower, and bearing the words "Cor cordium" with the familiar lines from the *Tempest*, had been for nearly a century an object of pilgrimage to lovers of the poet and had become an historic monument. The substitution for it of a piece of modern sculpture, however beautiful in itself, would shock a legitimate sentiment. Lady Shelley at once accepted this contention. She explained that she had had a misgiving that after her death some inappropriate memorial might be erected there, and she had only desired to anticipate any such desecration of the spot. The result was that the two ladies met and agreed that nothing should be changed. A deed embodying this agreement between the representatives of the two families was drawn up and deposited at the Embassy. Onslow Ford's monument was offered to and accepted by University College, Oxford, where its presence constitutes a tardy act of expiation for the expulsion of Percy Bysshe Shelley.

In 1891 Rome still preserved a good deal of its old social attraction. The political world was, as it has remained, wholly distinct from the social and only the more enterprising diplomatists found means to associate with the deputy and his ally the journalist. The great ladies of society had their respective evenings at home, which their friends attended without invitation, and the Embassies entertained liberally. The invasion of American wives and fortunes with the substitution of a cosmopolitan life for the traditions of ancient houses had not yet taken full effect. A majority of the great palaces were still occupied by the families of their founders, whose ecclesiastical elevation, with the accumulations derived from opulent benefices, had enabled them to rival the historic predominance of Colonnas, Orsinis and Caetanis. But new building was being carried out on an exaggerated scale. The famous villa gardens had



been sold to financial companies, and modern streets had invaded areas once shaded by venerable ilex trees and fragrant with the Roman violet. Speculation was rife and vast sums had been invested in residential quarters which outstripped the demand for accommodation. The menace of the crisis which involved so many local families in ruin was already in the air. My sojourn in Italy, however, at this time was so brief that I shall postpone any references to social and political life until the period of my second official appointment there in 1901.

Rome had already by then ceased to be a centre of artistic life and production, and Paris had taken its place. But a few veterans of the old time remained, like William Whetmore Story, who with his eminently social wife, still entertained all his interesting visitors in their apartment in the Palazzo Barberini, where Browning and Leighton had often been their guests. There was no more genial host than the old American sculptor with his recollections of pontifical Rome, his fine literary sense and his amiable love of paradox. I well remember how one night when I was dining with him he ventured to attack the postulates of Darwin, and especially the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. It was a charming theory, but nothing could be less true to what really happened in nature. And this was how he put his case. The full moon was large and golden on the African wild when the lioness came down to the water pool to drink. Two splendid lions, the rival kings of the jungle, saw her standing by the palm trees on the sandy brink and greatly they desired her. There was a thunderous roar as they sprang into the open ground with parted jaws and dripping fangs, and there in the moonlight they fought for her. They were equal in strength and endurance and with tooth and claw they ripped each other's flesh till both fell exhausted and bleeding to death. Meanwhile the occasion of their battle in savage pride watched the victims of her fascination faint and fail. And then it was that a third lean and mangy lion who had no heart to fight slunk out

of the bush with fawning tail and lecherous eye to carry off the prize. The theorist took no account of guile, and it was guile and not strength and beauty and courage that really prevailed.

The passing away of so many actors on the world's stage during the last three months of 1891 continued after the new year. In the first week in January the Khedive of Egypt, Tewfik Pasha, who had witnessed the initial stage in his country's restoration after the grim events of 1882, died in the flower of his age. The succession of his son, Abbas Hilmy, at the age of eighteen marked the commencement for us of an era of trouble in Egypt. On hearing the news Dufferin observed that it was most fortunate that he had not himself yet gone to Paris and that there should be no Ambassador in Constantinople. Those who might hope to draw advantage from the death of a good friend of ours might beat the air, but they would find no one to attack.

A week later Great Britain was plunged into very real mourning by the death after a brief illness of Prince Albert Victor. There are moments when accident or circumstance may have somewhat relaxed the instinctive sense of loyalty of the British people, and if such a moment had seemed recently appreciable this tragic death caused a strong reaction and a genuine wave of popular emotion went out in sympathy to the reigning house. On the comparatively rare occasions on which I had been together with the young Prince I had noticed one characteristic which greatly appealed to me. When he was with his family he never missed going up every night to his mother's room. No matter what he was doing, shortly after the Princess of Wales had retired, he would say quite naturally and without restraint, "I must go and see my mother," and after about half an hour he would return to the company.

Shortly after Dufferin's appointment to Paris a curious incident caused us no little perplexity and speculation. Sir Robert Morier had been selected to fill his place in Rome and Lord Vivian was to succeed Morier in St. Petersburg.



Their respective nominations were actually gazetted and their biographies had appeared in the press. But on the 19th of January we received an announcement that in view of the improvement in Morier's health he had consented to remain in Russia, and the appointment of Vivian to Rome was to be submitted for approval. The reason assigned for this sudden revision of definite decisions did not seem altogether convincing, and the general impression derived from it was that German influence had in some manner been exercised to obtain the annulment of the appointment at a Triple Alliance Court of an Ambassador whom official Germany chose to regard as an enemy.

Among the interesting visitors to Italy that winter was Paul Bourget. I made his acquaintance through my old friend, Count Guiseppe Primoli, who I rejoice to think is with us still, one of the last of the old school of great Roman gentlemen. He always attracted to his hospitable house any eminent French men of letters that came to Rome. Bourget had only recently been married and was accompanied by his pretty and charming young wife. He impressed me as very cosmopolitan in his tastes with a tolerance and appreciation somewhat exceptional among his countrymen in that it extended beyond the French border. I was interested to learn from him something of his method of work which occupied him on and off the whole day. After say half an hour's concentration on writing he would take a book and read, fixing his attention for the moment on quite different thoughts. Then he turned back to his manuscript, and so continued to alternate between writing and reading. For complete distraction he preferred a game of cards. He was then full of the *ménage* and the charm of family life, and I looked forward with natural curiosity to his next book written under a new and gracious influence.

During Carnival the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador Baron Bruck, who was an admirable stage-manager, organized at his Embassy a series of theatrical performances in

which I took a leading part, acting both in English and French. We produced a new piece each Saturday throughout the month of frivolity. The great event, however, of the season was the performance of the "Happy Pair," in which Lady Dufferin returned for the last time to her old love the stage, on which in former days she had won great success. She was a consummate actress, and this was the more remarkable as she gave the impression of being shy by nature and of having only conquered that disposition by an effort. Perhaps the most trying ordeal which I have ever experienced was rehearsing the little comedy, which we both knew well, in the empty theatre, empty save for the presence of Dufferin, seated in an arm-chair in the centre to pronounce judgment whether or not I was worthy of supporting Her Excellency. Fortunately his verdict was favourable and the performance was a veritable triumph for the departing Ambassadress.

The last night of Carnival was the scene of a memorable *festa* in Waldo Story's studio. Some fifty of us, mostly in masquerading dress, sat down to a picnic supper. Old Story and his wife were also present. Before we had finished, Lord and Lady Dufferin, who had been to an official dinner, joined the party, and were enthusiastically greeted. They were to leave a week later. A few words of welcome, which I believe I pronounced, drew from the Ambassador one of his delightful impromptu speeches. Then followed the tableau which we had organized beforehand of Carnival meeting Lent. Marion Crawford disguised as Mephistopheles, surrounded by all the characteristic masks, delivered the lines he had prepared, but retreated before the advance of Mrs. Waldo Story, as a beautiful nun, with an appropriate retinue, impersonating Lent. The scene is described in one of Crawford's Roman stories, *Pietro Ghisleri*. Then we began to dance, and the Ambassadress, who waltzed as keenly as her daughters, said, I fear with some prescience of truth, that she felt this would be her last little bit of fun. A week later they left for Paris, amid the regrets of all



Rome social and official, assembled at the station, and I realized that I should have been profoundly depressed if I had not been going to follow them in a few weeks' time. Remembering those merry days, I feel the more the tragedy of the Blackwood boys, as they were then. The eldest, Ava, died in South Africa on the threshold of manhood. The second, Terence, once my colleague in Paris, who eventually succeeded, also died prematurely. Basil, the third, who I think most resembled his father, went out to the Great War at forty-six as a second lieutenant and never returned. Only the youngest now survives to bear an honoured name.

My family paid a visit to Rome in March. My father had just completed his eightieth year, but was still vigorous and very happy to be back in the city which he had known for more than fifty years. A week after his arrival he was attacked by influenza, which turned to pneumonia, and he died of syncope of the heart without a struggle. He was buried in the cemetery at Testaccio next to his old friend Gibson, the sculptor. To him also I have to record a profound debt of gratitude for all his foresight, consideration and kindly tolerance of the vagaries of youth. After a brief interval I escorted my mother home and then returned to pack and take my leave. On my way I spent a week in Berlin with the Malets. There every one seemed anxious and ill at ease. The Emperor had been making a series of speeches which no one attempted to defend, and even those who gave him credit for honest purpose and zeal deplored his lack of judgment and moderation in expression.

A story had just gone the round of Europe of his having inscribed in the Municipal Album at Munich the words "*Regis voluntas suprema lex.*" The explanation given me in Berlin of an apparently rather provocative piece of self-assertion was the following. There were two registers at Munich, in which eminent visitors were invited to inscribe their names. The Emperor had already done so in the album presented to him. It was then discovered that a mistake had been made and that so august an autograph

should have been recorded in the Golden Book. The Regent, however, expressed the opinion that his imperial guest must not be further importuned, and informing him that he had done so, begged that his decision should be respected. Nevertheless, in spite of the Regent's wishes, the book reserved for more important autographs was submitted and then it was that the Emperor, intending to signify that the Regent's will must be his law, wrote in it instead of his name the much-discussed sentence. The explanation appears plausible, but it does not enhance the Emperor's reputation for discretion. At the same time I also learned in Berlin of a graceful and kindly act which should be weighed against charges which have been preferred of unfilial feeling. The old estate of Cronberg in the Taunus, adjoining the property on which the Empress Frederick was building her future residence, belonged to the State and she had therefore been unable to realize her ambition to acquire it. The Emperor, however, by offering adequate compensation elsewhere, succeeded in obtaining personal possession of the castle and grounds, which he then presented to his mother at Christmas.

The general election at home brought Mr. Gladstone back to power for the last time, but with a feeble majority depending on an internally discordant Irish party. His return to office was the signal for aggressive action by Russia in the Pamirs, and other disturbing symptoms in external relations. Lord Rosebery now became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He initiated a new experimental departure in the Embassies which was not maintained after he had left the Foreign Office. Holding, and very justly, that a general appreciation of the spirit and tendencies prevailing at any moment in another country demands a wider outlook and fuller information than that normally supplied in official correspondence, he directed that one of the junior members in every Embassy should be deputed to write him a fortnightly letter which would keep him well posted in all that was going on socially and



intellectually in the country where the secretary in question was stationed. Apart from politics *quidquid agunt homines* would form the matter of this correspondence which would of course be shown before despatch to the Ambassador. Lord Dufferin selected me for this duty, and it was no doubt due to the opportunity thus offered me that a big step in my profession took me by surprise at the end of the year.

I greatly enjoyed the summer in Paris. There was plenty of work to do and at that season of the year there were no social obligations ; so that except for an occasional week-end with my friends the Wagrams at Gros-Bois I saw no one, till the autumn brought back the fashionable world, and the great Madame Moore to amuse them. We were certainly not popular in France in those days, and the persistent abuse of Great Britain in the press, the daily charges of duplicity and bad faith, were depressing in their wearisome iteration. Nor was the campaign of depreciation confined to unofficial publications. It was my business to study parliamentary documents and I found to my surprise in the motives for a *projet de loi*, containing proposals to combat the depopulation of France, which though submitted by a private member was officially published, a statement to the effect that in Ireland, which Anglo-Saxon tyranny and systematic cruelty had converted into a veritable hell, people died or emigrated in masses, but married seldom, and still more seldom produced a family, so as not to perpetuate the existence of a race doomed to misery and despair.<sup>1</sup>

This attitude was no doubt in great measure due to the tension of our relations with France's new love, Russia, whose agents took every opportunity to stimulate it. Lord Dufferin's appointment to Paris was made the occasion for an article in the *Petit Journal* which, while paying a high compliment to his ability, called upon the French people to be on their guard, as he had been sent to Paris to break the Franco-Russian *entente*. He had been furnished by the British Government with unlimited money in order

<sup>1</sup> No. 2182 of 1892 (séance du 20 Juin, 1892), p. 12.

to buy the French press and leading statesmen! The contents of this article were reproduced in even blunter terms in other papers and went the round of the press. Four or five independent people, whose opinion was worthy of credence in such matters, informed the Ambassador at different times that this campaign was being inspired by Baron de Mohrenheim and the Russian Embassy. Some time afterwards the *Libre Parole*, the anti-semitic organ conducted by Drumont and the Marquis de Morés, had invited contributions to a fund for the sufferers from famine in Russia. But as subscribers had accompanied their offerings with comments in more than questionable taste, such as “*Pour le Rosseur des Juifs, 5 frcs,*” Mohrenheim suggested that the money so collected would best be sent directly to the Committee in Russia, thus avoiding the embarrassment of having to accept the comments as well as the cash. The rumour of a refusal to receive the sum subscribed led to the publication in the *Libre Parole* of a letter from the Marquis de Morés recording a conversation which he claimed to have had some time previously with the Russian Ambassador, in the course of which the latter was reported to have said that he did not know with whom to deal in France; the press and the leading politicians had been bought by England; M. Clemenceau openly denounced a Russian alliance, etc. The language thus attributed to him coincided in a striking manner with the substance of the article in the *Libre Parole*. This letter was widely reproduced in the papers, none of which, oddly enough, protested against these insinuations that the press could be bought. Clemenceau then wrote in somewhat acrimonious terms to Mohrenheim and, after waiting a considerable time for an acknowledgment which did not come, published his letter. This compelled the Ambassador to reply, but he confined himself to welcoming Clemenceau’s statement that he was not a partisan of *la politique anglaise*. He was also interviewed and to an inquiry why he had not repudiated the other assertions of Morés, merely replied that he could not



concern himself with what the press said of him. The source which had inspired the attack on Dufferin was thus pretty plainly indicated. It seemed superfluous to emphasize it further in any report. But Mr. Gladstone's comment when he heard the story was curious as revealing the simplicity of his judgments on foreign issues. He observed: "I am glad to see that Dufferin acquits Mohrenheim of any complicity in the matter."

The enthusiasm of the boulevards for everything Russian at that time was remarkable, and Russian newspapers were on sale at the kiosques. Nevertheless a Franco-Russian fête in the Tuileries garden for the benefit of the Russian poor was a disastrous failure, which proved very costly to the pockets of its initiators.

The violence of the *Libre Parole* called into existence an opposition paper the *Alliance Nationale*. The first number issued suggested that its promoters sought to obtain advertisement by provoking a duel. For the whole of the first page was occupied by a most virulent attack on Drumont and Morés, and the latter was reminded that the plea of France for the French did not come well from one whose real name was Antonio Marca de Vallombrosa.

Morés was an expert swordsman and always ready to support his often reckless assertions with his rapier. In the course of that summer he had to appear before the tribunal together with his seconds in consequence of a duel resulting in the death of Captain Mayer. In the course of the trial certain facts were elicited, which are not without interest as revealing a state of mind which prepared the way for the Dreyfus case some years later. The duel was the outcome of a previous affair between Captain Crémieu Foa and M. Lamasse, whose signature appeared at the foot of a number of articles in the *Libre Parole* entitled "*Les Juifs dans l'Armée*," and indeed was the last of a series of encounters which they provoked. Captain Crémieu Foa, an officer of Hebrew origin, had sent a challenge to M. Drumont and at the ensuing meeting both combatants

were slightly wounded. M. Lamasse then provoked the Captain, who accepted the challenge. But his seconds in the former duel were of opinion that there were no grounds for fighting and considered that the matter should be referred to a court of honour. The anti-semites, however, took steps to force an issue, and Captain Crémieu announced his intention of demanding satisfaction not only from M. Lamasse but also from the latter's seconds, the Marquis de Morés and M. Guérin. Crémieu's seconds were Captain Mayer and Lieutenant Trochu. At the meeting held to arrange the preliminaries it transpired that the articles which had occasioned the dispute had not been written by M. Lamasse, but by an officer of the active army. A M. Ernest Crémieu Foa, a relative of one of the combatants, had endeavoured to intervene at the meeting and the record of the proceedings was shown to him. At the same time he was clearly informed that it had been agreed between the seconds to keep the document secret. In spite of this warning he took a copy and gave it to the press. On the field the next morning Morés charged Captain Mayer with having broken his word. Captain Mayer replied that he was not responsible, but was nevertheless prepared to accept responsibility, and magnanimously refrained from divulging the name of the real culprit. In the encounter which ensued Mayer, a promising officer who appears to have been much liked at the military school where he was an instructor, was killed. The dramatic incident at the trial was the denunciation of M. Ernest Crémieu by the Marquis de Morés, who after the verdict of acquittal was the object of a popular ovation.

Emboldened by success Morés next endeavoured to provoke an encounter with M. Etienne, a former under-secretary for the Colonies, whom he charged with malversation and venality. These attacks, which became almost hysterical in their violence, were, however, ignored and the Chamber signified its approval of M. Etienne's attitude by electing him vice-president.



The national fête in September of this year was celebrated on an unusual scale as being the centenary of the declaration of the republic. An elaborate historical procession was organized which cost the municipality £24,000. But its effect was disappointing. The only interesting detail was the reproduction of the uniform of the troops who fought at Valmy. The crowd in the streets struck me as generally apathetic, certainly not enthusiastic.

The illustrious author of the *Vie de Jésus* and Lord Tennyson died in the same week at the beginning of October. A discussion arose as to whether Renan should receive the honour of interment in the Pantheon. The reply given to the advocates of such a national tribute was that a decision of the Chamber was necessary, and the Chamber was not sitting. But as the burial of Victor Hugo in the Pantheon was determined by a presidential decree, the inference seemed legitimate that the Government hesitated to take a step which would have outraged clerical susceptibilities.

The passing of Tennyson evoked the most sympathetic expressions from the world of letters in France, and it was remarkable how clearly his position in English literature was understood. There was at that time a growing interest in English writers, who had long been neglected. The appreciative studies of M. de Pressensé and M. de Wycewa, who had recently translated *Wuthering Heights*, were a pleasant contrast to the acerbity of political diatribes and revealed that there were calmer waters in which vessels of different flags might sail in consort. Two famous French critics, however, at this time fell out among themselves. The question had been raised of erecting a statue to Beaude-laire. M. Brunetière objected and stigmatized his work as a degradation of art. Thereupon M. Delpit in the *Figaro* could find no words strong enough to express his contempt for Brunetière, whom he hoped he might never have the misfortune to meet again. Seconds were appointed. But they could not agree as to which was the aggrieved party.

The Minister of Public Instruction, M. Locroy, to whom the dispute was referred, decided that the issue was purely a literary one which presented no real grounds for an appeal to arms.

A singular bet contributed to the gaiety of Paris at the end of September when the city was not too full. A wealthy financier wagered the price of the entertainment that he would collect a hundred ladies to breakfast with his friend on the following day. He spent the evening going round the various haunts at which *ces dames* do mostly congregate and invited no less than one hundred and fifty. Unfortunately for him a considerable number assumed that the invitation was a hoax, and only eighty responded. He therefore had to pay the bill, but did not complain, as the breakfast was very hilarious. Fired with ambition by this example two other "sportmen" made a similar bet, but the number of guests was augmented to two hundred and fifty. This time they all came. But the account at the restaurant was a very heavy one, owing to the long list of breakages.

During a brief visit to England in December I once more met the venerable Premier at Alfred Lyttelton's. It was a party of young people whose company the old man seemed to enjoy. But it struck me as significant that his own conversation dealt chiefly with reminiscences of the 'forties and the 'fifties. Mr. Gladstone discussed with me possible candidates for the vacant Laureateship. I was under the impression that he would give serious consideration to the appointment of William Watson, in favour of whom as a real poet I recorded my modest testimony. But no nomination was made while a Liberal Government remained in office, and the coveted distinction was eventually bestowed as a reward for the services of a leader-writer in the *Standard*, of whom Whistler might have said, in the spirit of his malicious reference to Leighton, "Writes poetry too, don't he?" That fantastic master of the burin and the pen had now transferred himself to Paris, and had shaken



the dust of an unappreciative England off his dainty shoes. We still foregathered from time to time dining in the restaurants beyond the Seine where he had found a domicile. A touch of bitterness had taken the place of the old sparkling fun and the spirit of mischief. Jimmy was growing old.

The Government had just decided to despatch a British mission to Uganda. An exploratory expedition of the British East Africa Chartered Company had entered that country in April, 1890. But experience had shown that it was beyond their strength to attempt the administration of areas so far from the coast, and the Company had announced its intention of withdrawing from the whole region. In view of the menace which such abandonment must involve to the lives of many missionaries who had penetrated into Uganda, a sum sufficient to enable the company to maintain a force there until the end of 1892 was provided by friends of the Church Missionary Society. A civil war in the country during that year and the difficulties encountered by the Company's officers in endeavouring to re-establish peace were not calculated to induce the Directors to reconsider their decision. Confronted with this emergency the Government undertook to defray the expense incurred by the company for three months longer until the end of March 1893. Meanwhile they decided to send a Commissioner to examine the conditions in Equatorial Africa and to recommend the best course to adopt in "dealing with the country"; in other words to report for retention or evacuation. My friend Gerald Portal, who had acquired some experience of African travel on a mission in 1887 to King John of Abyssinia, and who had now been for some two years Agent and Consul-General at Zanzibar, was entrusted with this difficult duty. There was no time to lose, as the march of over 800 miles from the coast, with a large caravan of heavily laden porters, might be reckoned to take nearly three months. The expedition must, therefore, start not later than the 1st of January, 1893.

On the 9th of December I received a most kind letter from Lord Rosebery, offering me the charge of the Agency at Zanzibar, which carried with it the High Commissionership of the whole coastal area administered by the East Africa Company from the equator to the boundary of German East Africa, during Portal's absence, the prospective duration of which it was hardly possible to calculate. This letter reached me on a Friday morning. On the following Monday, the 12th, a Messageries steamer was due to leave Marseilles by which some of the officers taking part in the expedition were to travel. As it would be necessary for me to go to London and receive instructions it was presumed that I should hardly be able to catch that steamer. I replied by telegraph that I would be in London the following morning and would undertake to leave Marseilles on the 12th. The Friday was devoted to breaking up my small establishment and packing. I crossed by the night boat; went to the Foreign Office in the morning to receive some general instructions together with many reams of printed correspondence to digest, and made a few necessary purchases of tropical equipment. In the afternoon I said good-bye to one or two intimate friends, was received by Lord Rosebery, who was full of kindly encouragement and, after dining at home to take leave of my mother and sister, returned once more to Paris by the night boat. On Sunday evening I was on the way to Marseilles with my Italian servant.

The two officers whom I was to meet were Roddy Owen and my old Balliol friend, Raymond Portal. The former, who would be more correctly described as Brigade-Major Owen, D.S.O., I had met in London, but till then knew only slightly. He had established a title to fame as the most consummate gentleman rider of my younger days. After winning the Grand National, however, he had decided that it was time to take his military duties seriously, and had rendered valuable service in a recent expedition against the Jebus in West Africa.



For Raymond Portal life had not been altogether smooth since he had been the object of my hero-worship at Balliol. He had always determined to enter the army, but by the time he had taken his degree at Oxford, on which his father insisted, he had already passed an age limit which rendered him ineligible for anything but a West India Regiment. He had served in Sierra Leone, Demarara and the West Indies, and had contracted fevers which it was difficult to shake off. Eventually he had been able to exchange into the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, and at the moment when he was ordered to East Africa he was adjutant to the Mounted Infantry.

They had left London on the Sunday morning and reached Marseilles by a later train about an hour after I had arrived. We were at once confronted with a difficulty about the ammunition for the expedition, which could not be carried by the steamer without a special authorization. We had to find the Consul-General, and there was little time to spare. With his assistance, however, the difficulty was overcome, and in the afternoon we got under way in the s.s. *Ava*, bound for Port Said, Obock, Aden and Zanzibar. At Aden Colonel "Frankie" Rhodes, of Sudan fame and actually Military Secretary to the Governor of Bombay, was to join us.

It was a great pleasure to me to be once more with Raymond Portal, whom I had not seen for fifteen years, since the days of the Iffley running ground and the Balliol boat, when we were head of the river. Time had hardly changed him. He had still the old commanding charm, enhanced by his slight touch of shyness or reserve and the smile that went to the heart. I had never felt in higher spirits. Hitherto my professional activities had been limited to observation and to assisting my seniors, with occasional independent work on the preparation of reports. But now at the age of thirty-four I was to be my own master at a post where I should have to deal with difficult international issues as well as administrative problems. Our position

in the new protectorate was as yet none too firmly established, and the unsettled mainland where, except in the area of Mombasa, the tenure of the East Africa Company was precarious, offered the prospect of expeditions and adventure in the land of dreams.



## CHAPTER IX

### ZANZIBAR, 1893

With the record of many years to study in printed papers relating to East Africa, and a daily five-mile duty tramp up and down the decks of the *Ava* with Raymond and Roddy, the three weeks' sea journey passed rapidly and pleasantly enough. On a Messageries steamer there were happily none of those determined sportsmen who insist on your running races, carrying an egg in a spoon, or depositing potatoes in a bucket. At Aden the majority of our first-class passengers who were to tranship for Bombay left the vessel, and together with them a local banker who maintained that there was no place in the world like Aden or any that he would rather choose for his residence. On the other hand we were joined there by the immortal Frankie Rhodes, officially Colonel Rhodes, D.S.O., Royal Dragoons, Military Secretary to the Governor of Bombay. If we had been hitherto a passably happy ship we became from that moment a merry one. Even our skipper, a little dour of countenance, caught his infectious gaiety and smiled all over at Frankie's genial effort at French conversation, which consisted in repeating: "Mon capitaine, j'ai beaucoup de considération pour vous!" Physically Frankie Rhodes was a complete contrast to his more famous brother Cecil, for whom he had a profound admiration. I don't know whether he had ever looked very young, as I am perfectly certain he could never have grown old. There was an extraordinary charm in that wizened quizzical face, with the uplifted chin, and the constant twinkle in his light blue eyes. He was compounded of merry humour, undaunted courage and infinite kindness of heart.

There remained on board, besides our four selves, two other passengers, one a young Englishman of that curious type who spend their lives travelling round and round the world with no special aim in view, bound at that moment for Madagascar, and the other a lady medical missionary of uncertain age, who as the solitary representative of the eternal feminine, so indispensable to the gallant colonel, received the full blast of his humorous attention. I do not know whether Miss Jones, as I may call her, may still be in the world of the living, but should she happily be so, I am sure she will cordially remember his genial chaff. One morning, with that *sans gêne* which distinguishes many of our countrywomen in foreign parts, she had appeared at early breakfast in a very sketchy costume, swathed in what was then known as a grey waterproof, a grim early Victorian garment. She informed us that she had had a dreadfully disturbed night, and Frankie looked severely round the table. "What do you think happened, Colonel!" said Miss Jones; "a flying fish came through my scuttle and settled on my bed!"—"Ah, happy little fish!" said Frankie, with a quiver in his voice.

We were off Cape Guardafui on Christmas Eve, and at 7 a.m. on the morning of December 30th we anchored in the roadstead of Zanzibar, and saw for the first time that mysterious white city framed in groves of palm and mango, which was regarded as the metropolis of East Africa. The anchor was hardly down before Gerry Portal was on board. He had hoped to leave the following day for Mombasa as every twenty-four hours was of importance if he was to arrive before the East Africa Company's officers withdrew, and he had therefore arranged to take his leave of the Sultan and to present me at nine o'clock that very morning. But the staff had had so brief a time in which to make any preparations before leaving England that one day more to complete equipment locally was recognized as indispensable, and the departure was postponed till New Year's Day. We hastily got into uniform at the Agency and marched through



the narrow unfamiliar eastern streets, which were lined with soldiers, preceded by the native Agency Guards with red coats over their white *galabeas*, to the palace, a large barrack-like edifice with a wide open area in front between it and the sea. An excellent band of Goanese musicians played "God Save the Queen" as we approached. Rows of dignified Arabs thronged the lower rooms and lined the staircase, at the head of which stood Sultan Seyyid Ali. He led us up to the far end of the Ceremonial Hall of State, where the members of his family and the dignitaries of the Sultanate had their official places, in strict order of a precedence to which they clung with tenacious insistence. We occupied a row of gilt and velvet chairs to his right. The customary spiced coffee and sweet sherbert were then offered and a drop of oil of roses was sprinkled on the head. The Sultan who had all the grace and dignity of manner which distinguishes the address of the high-caste Arab, said a few amicable phrases and wished Portal a prosperous journey, after which we took our leave in the same ceremonial manner. I had not yet got my tropical uniform, and the full-dress of padded blue cloth with gold oak leaves was trying in the hot steamy air. It was midsummer south of the equator, though the difference between seasons is not great. The first impression of my new post was profoundly interesting and rich in local colour, and not less so was that of our walk in the afternoon along the only tolerable road then existing towards the country farms and the dark masses of mango trees which contrasted with the lighter and more vivid green of the feathery cocoa palms.

It was invaluable for me to be able to spend a day or two with Portal and to elicit from him as much information as possible regarding the actual situation both in the island and on the mainland, which I at once realized would present innumerable problems wholly fresh to my experience, demanding rapidity of decision for which no guidance could be anticipated from home. Indeed I soon discovered

that to invite instructions on local issues only elicited the reply that I being on the spot and able to appreciate the circumstances must act according to my best judgment, which was just what I wanted.

I learned from Portal that the life of the reigning Sultan was regarded as precarious and that there was every prospect that a crisis might occur before many months were over. He would not see an European doctor, but phthisis was suspected and there were symptoms of dropsy. We therefore discussed the problem of succession. The general rule in Mohammedan countries is that the eldest member of the reigning family should succeed. But here the accepted practice had not been strictly followed. An elder brother of the reigning Sultan, the next in age to the famous Sultan Barghash, had been twice passed over. The sanction lay in the submission of the people and the acceptance of a ruler by the powerful Arab families. This was practically tantamount to the principle of the longest sword, which appeared to be a Muscat tradition. The candidate with the longest sword would evidently be the one supported by the protecting Power. Three claimants would probably contest the succession if the present ruler died. There was Khaled, the son of Barghash, a rather truculent youth of eighteen : there was Hamed Bin Thwain, the son of a brother of Barghash now dead, a man of about forty, of reputed high character and a student of Arab literature : and finally there was Mahmoud, an elder cousin of the reigning Sultan. The last was an amiable gentleman of a certain age and a popular candidate with the turbulent Arab faction, who felt he would readily become their creature. Khaled's claim was less strong than that of Hamed, who was double his age, but as the son of Barghash he would have his supporters. He was, however, for other reasons undesirable. Seyyid Hamed should, therefore, it seemed, become the candidate for the support of the longest sword, but Gerry recommended me to study the position carefully and to come to a definite decision on this point without loss of time. I may say at



once that before many weeks were over my conclusions were entirely favourable to Hamed Bin Thwain.

The British colony in Zanzibar entertained Portal and his officers at a farewell dinner at the Club on the last night of 1892 and at 4 a.m. on the morning of New Year's Day we assembled on the deck of H.M.S. *Philomel*, a fast cruiser of beautiful lines, commanded by Captain Charles Campbell, who had kindly offered to carry the whole party to Mombasa, some 120 miles north, the starting point for caravans to Uganda.

We entered Port Reitz on the southern side of Mombasa Island on the afternoon of New Year's Day with enough daylight to spare to appreciate the magnificent harbour through which we steamed for about a mile along shores rich in tropic wealth of cocoa palms alternating with the dark foliated mango, over which we could see the crenelations of an old Portuguese castle or fort. Here we were met by Berkeley (now Sir Ernest Berkeley) of the consular service, who had for a year been acting as administrator of the East Africa Company, and who was to accompany the Mission to Uganda. The porters, 400 in number, with their 65 lb. loads, who had started in dhows some time previously, had already been despatched a day's march inland in charge of Lieut. Lennard Arthur, of the Rifle Brigade, and Mr. Foaker, an experienced caravan leader who had already once made the journey to Uganda. The medical officer, Dr. Moffat, who had tramped 200 miles from the Scottish industrial mission at Kibwezi to join the party, had also gone on; General Mathews, the First Minister of the Zanzibar Government, had proceeded to the first camp to lend his invaluable assistance and experience in organizing the big caravan.

That night we remained on board, enjoying the generous hospitality of Captain Campbell. With the break of dawn the baggage went ashore together with a grey pony, which was to put to the test the truth of the generally accepted opinion that no quadruped could survive the passage through a country haunted by the tsetse fly.

Some seven miles of 24-inch tram line had been laid by the company to a point where work had been suspended in view of a more ambitious project, which, however, could only be contemplated with a Government guarantee. There were a few serviceable trollies and on these with boxes for seats the Uganda expedition started. Captain Campbell and I accompanied them to the rallying point, and there they left us disappearing over the undulated bush country. It was impossible to part under such conditions with very dear friends without some misgiving whether we could all ever hope to meet again, and the grim thought would hauntingly recur which one of all those gallant souls it might be, if any were to fall a victim to the chances of the great unknown.<sup>1</sup> Not long afterwards Lieutenant C. Villiers, Royal Horse Guards, who happened to arrive in East Africa with the object of starting on a private shooting and exploring expedition, obtained permission from the home authorities to join the Uganda Mission, if he could overtake them, which he succeeded in doing.

After a visit to the Company's headquarters at Mombasa, and an inspection of the interesting Portuguese fort, I returned in the *Philomel* to Zanzibar and plunged at once into the masses of work which awaited me.

A very brief historical retrospect seems necessary in order to make clear the situation existing there as well as in East Africa, which after remaining for centuries a *terra incognita* was now beginning to be opened to European penetration, largely as a result of circumstances to which I have referred in the second chapter of this book.

The islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, portions of a coral reef which runs parallel with the African coast some twenty miles distant at the nearest point, were conquered by and became an apanage of the Arab Sultans of Muscat. But in 1856, after a dispute between the heirs of Sultan Said, the two thrones were separated. Majid, the son of Said, was

<sup>1</sup> The story of the expedition will be found in *The Mission to Uganda*, by Sir Gerald Portal (Arnold), 1894.



succeeded in Zanzibar by his son Barghash, an enlightened ruler who visited England, acquired steamships to develop communications and greatly extended his dominions on the mainland. After a treaty negotiated with him by Sir Bartle Frere and eventually signed by Kirk in 1873, the slave market in Zanzibar, which had remained the chief distributing centre of that infamous traffic, was finally closed. The cordial relations which he constantly maintained with Great Britain were due to the influence of that remarkable Scotchman, Sir John Kirk, who had in his early days accompanied Livingstone to the Zambesi as medical officer and naturalist. His official connexion with Zanzibar dated from 1867. Great Britain and France were at that time both pledged by treaty to maintain the independence of Zanzibar, but owing to the confidence which Barghash reposed in him, Kirk had in practice as Consul or Consul-General directed the Sultan's policy many years before the question of a Protectorate arose. As early as 1877 Seyyid Barghash had been disposed to grant a lease of his mainland territories to Sir William Mackinnon. But the proposal met with no encouragement from the Conservative Government then in office at home, and vast areas which British enterprise first explored were thus left to be scrambled for.

To the promoters of the colonial movement in Germany Zanzibar, as the metropolis and emporium of East Africa, appeared to be the all-important key position. A German warship in 1884 conveyed thither a German Consul-General, the well-known Gerhard Rholfs, with a brief to undermine British influence and instructions to press upon the Sultan certain claims of a domestic character which a self-respecting Arab ruler could not possibly entertain. His high-handed and somewhat clumsy efforts met with no success. But, as I have already mentioned elsewhere, while the Congo Conference was initiating its sittings at Berlin and attention was rather diverted from the local situation, Dr. Karl Peters with Count Pfeil and Dr. Juhlke, disguised as mechanics but provided with a plentiful supply of German

flags, crossed over to the mainland with the object of concluding treaties with local chiefs, especially in the Kilimanjaro region. Here, however, they had been anticipated by Mr. H. H. Johnston (afterwards Sir Harry Johnston), who had organized a scientific mission, and who, acting in accordance with Kirk's inspiration, secured pre-emption in treaty making.

The outcome of the African negotiations in Europe resulted in the limitation of the Sultan's dominions to a ten-mile strip along the coast, while expediency, as viewed by Mr. Gladstone's administration, of which Lord Granville was for such issues the official mouthpiece, brought about a virtual partition of the Sultan's dominions, and a reciprocal recognition of spheres of influence. Kirk, who so long as he enjoyed a certain latitude of action had fought the battle of Great Britain single-handed, was now compelled much against the grain to exercise pressure on the Sultan to submit to German annexations. He carried out his uncongenial task with all loyalty, but there was no more work for this great public servant to perform in Zanzibar. His last inestimable service was to prepare the ground for the eventual concession by Barghash in 1887 to Sir William Mackinnon of the territories which were taken over and for a time administered by the Imperial British East Africa Company. He left Zanzibar in 1886. The life of the Chartered Company was but a brief one. But it filled an important transition stage in our Colonial history, and carried out imperial duties the importance of which public opinion at home was not then sufficiently ripe and enlightened to appreciate. British East Africa, now known as the Kenya Colony, and Uganda, were thus saved to the Empire in which they are incorporated. Sir John Kirk lived on into the present year and thus survived to witness time's revenge, by which German East Africa also fell under British administration. His name together with that of Sir William Mackinnon will always be held in honour there. And with their names will be associated in the greater



East Africa those of Sir Harry Johnston and Sir Lloyd William Mathews, of whom I have much to tell.

After the arrangement concluded in 1890 with Germany, which provided for the surrender of Heligoland, British protection over Zanzibar was recognized. The sovereignty of the Sultan still extended over all the coastal region between the Umba and Tana Rivers which was leased to the British East Africa Company. Witu, a German protectorate till 1890, was also then taken over by them with Kismayu at the mouth of the Juba. The Benadir ports north of Kismayu were still administered directly if somewhat nominally by the Sultan, but these were shortly to be ceded under a similar lease to Italy. Sultan Barghash had died in 1888, and his brother, Seyyid Khalifa, who took his place, only reigned for two years. The third brother to reign in succession, Seyyid Ali, saw his safety to lie in demanding British protection, which was granted in 1890. He had not, however, perhaps fully realized all that it entailed, and consequently found himself continually at issue with his Arab subjects, who soon discovered that the introduction of western methods was not compatible with that abuse of power which it was their personal interest to maintain.

When Gerald Portal became Agent and Consul-General at Zanzibar in March, 1891, the Protectorate was still rather a name than a fact. The Sultan was not readily disposed to accept restrictions on his exclusive disposal of the revenue and had no adequate conception of the reciprocal obligations imposed upon him. While traffic in slaves had been abolished, attempts were frequently made surreptitiously to evade the law, and domestic slavery still subsisted. The Arabs viewed with sullen mistrust the regulations for its control, which they foresaw meant the eventual extinction of an institution which was bound up with their conception of family life and appeared to them a necessary condition of existence. Our field of social and economic action was, moreover, severely restricted by the existence

of ancient treaties with Muscat, which conferred upon foreign subjects resident in Zanzibar the privileges, immunities and independence of local jurisdiction which are enjoyed under capitulations in Oriental countries. A good deal had been already accomplished under his energetic administration. The Sultan had been induced to accept a definite civil list, and all other revenues passed into the control of a government office, presided over by a British Chief Minister. The customs department had been thoroughly reorganized and, though the menace of competition from German East Africa had led to the rather hazardous experiment of declaring Zanzibar a free port and to the abolition of the 5 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on imports established by treaty, some compensation had been found in landing and storage charges, which were willingly paid in return for the greater security to goods offered by the Government wharf and warehouses. A local post office had been organized under the management of a British naval officer, and all the foreign post offices except the French had been closed. The army and police had been placed under the command of a British officer, Captain Hatch, who had the local rank of a brigadier-general. Steps had been taken to provide for the lighting at nights of the labyrinthine city, though these could not be enforced on foreign subjects. Elements of order and regular government had thus been introduced. But much still remained to do. The conditions and sanctions of the Protectorate were still nebulous, and reform depended largely on the goodwill and co-operation of the Sultan, who grew more and more disposed to make difficulties, as he encountered the constant protests of his Arab subjects and felt his own independence compromised or diminished.

The Chief Minister, or Grand Vizir, as he was called by the native population, was General Mathews (afterwards Sir Lloyd Mathews). In the course of some five-and-twenty years' service in Zanzibar he only returned home twice, so that he was comparatively unknown in his native country.



I therefore feel it to be a duty to his honoured memory to rescue his name, in so far as I may be able, from the list of "England's forgotten worthies." Mathews began life in the Navy and took part in the Ashanti War in 1873. While serving in H.M.S. *London*, the station ship maintained at Zanzibar for the repression of the slave trade, his services were lent to Barghash, who desired to have his troops drilled and instructed in the European manner. In 1881 he left the Navy and took permanent service with the rank of General under the Sultan, for whom he conducted many expeditions on the African continent. When the Protectorate was declared he was given British official status as Consul-General for the mainland, where his name was a power. But he never took up his duties in that capacity, and was lent as First Minister to the Sultanate. Mathews was a man of singular greatness of heart. His patience and kindness were inexhaustible. No Englishman that I have known had the power of entering more completely into the mind of the native or winning his confidence and affection so entirely. So great was his reputation for equity and wisdom that natives would undertake journeys of many months from the interior to submit a dispute to the arbitration of *Bwana* Mathews. Sitting outside his house he would hear the lengthy exposition of the two disputants who squatted on the ground beside him, would interrogate them and reason with them, and finally pronounce a decision which they would accept without question. There was no traveller in East Africa in those days who had not had cause to remember with gratitude his readily proffered assistance and advice, nor was there any poor man in Zanzibar who ever appealed to his generosity in vain. He was, to quote the words used of him by Lord Rosebery in a letter to myself, a "real apostle of Empire." To me he seemed the most lovable man I had ever met.

The duties of my new position were multifarious. Among these the one which I most disliked was that of acting as Sessions Judge and hearing appeals in our consular court,

which was presided over by Judge W. B. Cracknall, a great character in the small British community, supported by Mr. Haviland de Sausmarez as assistant judge. The large Indian colony, with its numerous wealthy khojah and banyan merchants, was inclined to be litigious, and the Court was always busy. Among a number of the litigants perjury seemed to be not at all in disrepute. But what I found most trying was the persistence of the Parsee lawyers in protesting that every question addressed to a witness by their opponents was a "leading" one, a contention on which it is by no means easy to adjudicate without the habit of courts. Cracknall, however, had great experience in these matters, and though I did my best to re-examine every case on its merits, I always ended by upholding his judgments.

I endeavoured, and not without a certain measure of success, by conciliating the foreign residents and colonies, to induce them to agree to a small voluntary contribution to municipal services, such as lighting and especially sanitation, which needed serious attention. On every side progress was impeded by the rights of foreign proprietorship or foreign protection accorded to native proprietors. Even the first essential, road-making and repairing, was hampered by taboos and superstitions which prevented encroachment on cemeteries. But a good deal was accomplished by persistence. I have heard exception taken to the use for road-making of the chain-gang, which involves the linking together of native convicts by steel collars round their necks connected by strong light chains, so that the arms are left free for work. In primitive communities elaborate supervision of prisoners is not possible, and the entrusting of firearms to the police is not always desirable. To those who knew the horrible conditions of the local prison it was clear that to be able to come out and work in the chain gang was a real privilege. I early formed the ambition of constructing a proper prison on one of the small islands and suppressing the insanitary old fort over which we had



no direct control, where convicts dragged out a miserable existence chained to the wall in dark dungeons. The plans had been approved and the foundations had been laid before I left.

Then there was the important duty of applying the international rules laid down by the Berlin and Brussels Acts, for Zanzibar was included in the conventional Basin of the Congo. Vigilance against the slave-trade was exercised by the International Slave Trade Bureau, consisting of the representatives of the signatory powers who met periodically at the British Agency. The monotony of proceedings was often relieved for me by lively encounters between the antagonistic French and German Consuls. The latter, a capable and well-equipped official, knew his business thoroughly and, having all the conventions by heart, understood the length of our tether to a millimetre. But, externally perfectly courteous, he had a rather irritating official manner which never failed to exasperate my French colleague, who used to observe to me at the conclusion of our meetings, "Ce qui m'agace surtout, c'est que ce monsieur a toujours raison." I could not help having a certain sympathy with my friend with whom I was constantly at issue officially, for in those days France was applying the policy of pin-pricks. In private life we were on the best of terms, and always ready to dine together after a brisk encounter which had brought him round in a frock-coat and silk hat (in the tropics) in order to make "*mes reserves les plus formelles*" against some excess of zeal on the part of the police, who had failed to realize that Omar bin Hassan was under French protection. M. Labosse was a charming type of the old-fashioned French Consul in the East, with a grey moustache and imperial, reminiscent of the Second Empire. An excellent agent for his country, he had little respect for the Governments which succeeded one another so rapidly at home. He was ready to be ruled by any who would govern honestly. He would willingly, he said, serve under a board of ladies so long as they were

attractive and amiable. But he had no patience with pretentious elderly deputies with gold spectacles and grey side-whiskers. He must have been dead many years now, for even then he was about to retire. In spite of our constant official quarrels I look back to my memories of him with a very cordial regard.

There was also the supervision of the illicit slave traffic in the islands themselves. Dhows returning north to Muscat and the Persian Gulf with the monsoon would endeavour to secure consignments of slaves, especially of children, stolen or illegally sold, and these would be smuggled on board in some one of the many creeks round the coast. I had an elaborate internal secret service for securing information about such irregularities, and the warships on the station maintained a constant and vigilant patrol of boats. Our greatest difficulty in grappling with this evil was due to the number of dhow owners who sailed under the French flag, as the French had always excluded the right of search and the powers of naval officers were restricted to verifying a ship's papers, which were naturally always found correct. An Arab would purchase, perhaps vicariously without ever having been there, a small plot of land in Madagascar, and so obtain protection and the right to fly the flag. This was a continuous source of friction which threatened at one moment to assume a serious character, when we endeavoured to maintain the right of policing vessels in territorial waters. Several dhows sailing under the local or Muscat flag, with their hold full of kidnapped slaves, were captured during my stay in Zanzibar.

The announcement of these captures led to an instructive correspondence, which was published as a Parliamentary Paper. The secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society sent a letter to the press in which he took the figure of 200 slaves rescued and liberated in one month as his major premise, and the dictum of "some of the highest authorities" that for every slave thus rescued "at least twenty are smuggled



through " as his minor premise, and so arrived at the figure of 4,000 a month. He then multiplied this by the months of the year, and assumed that an aggregate of from 40,000 to 50,000 were carried away annually from Zanzibar and the neighbouring ports. To answer such a contention was easy for anyone familiar with the facts of the case. As the only native traffic with the mainland was by dug-out canoes on perfectly calm days, it was obvious that very few fresh slaves could be surreptitiously landed in the islands. Their total population was perhaps somewhat over 150,000, but 200,000 would have been a very liberal estimate. The exportation of slaves could only take place in the sailing vessels which came down from the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. These dhows only made one journey to Zanzibar and back in the year. They arrived with the north-east monsoon, carrying cargoes of dates, ghee, etc., and returned as soon as the south-west monsoon, which prevails for the other half of the year, began to blow. During March and April, the months of arrival, fifty-one dhows in all had come in from the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. This number included many Indian boats which were not open to suspicion, and many more only large enough to carry a few passengers beside their crew. Even of those owners who might readily have carried slaves if there were no fear of detection, only a small proportion were disposed to incur the very grave risks and penalties involved. The possibilities of such traffic were, therefore, happily reduced to very narrow limits, and I held to the opinion from all the information at my disposal that very few consignments escaped our vigilance. The secretary undoubtedly had framed his indictment with all honesty of purpose, but in arriving at conclusions which suggested that a quarter of the total population was annually carried off into slavery, his zeal had overshot the mark.

The rescued slaves were at once given manumission papers. They were medically examined and their immediate

needs were supplied. The difficulty still remained of how to dispose of them, and here the British and Foreign Missions rendered invaluable assistance. The British Universities' Mission was the first to be approached. Their resources did not enable them to take more than a certain proportion, and they were anxious to secure the children to train in their well-equipped schools. After they had absorbed as many as they were able to accommodate, I used to invite the Fathers of the Alsatian Mission to take as many as they could. Their answer invariably was that they would take charge of all or of as many as were not otherwise disposed of. Their attitude in these questions always seemed to me the sound and practical one for missionary enterprise in Africa, even if it was a little in contrast with the more sentimental point of view of our Anglican establishments. The latter explained that their aims were purely educational, while I always regretted that they did not give more attention to training in citizenship and in instruction how to earn a livelihood by the exercise of some simple craft. Their highest ambition seemed to be the training of the most promising boys for the diaconate, so that they also might some day be qualified themselves to take up missionary work. Very few, however, reached this standard. The Black Fathers, on the other hand, told me that they attempted little in the way of religious instruction. The method they pursued was to turn these forlorn creatures into useful citizens and make them capable of looking after themselves. The religious side, so far as they were capable of appreciating it or assimilating it, could be left till later when they had learned how to live. This was certainly a more useful work than teaching boys to sing translations of Hymns Ancient and Modern in Swaheli. In reverting to these experiences and recollections, I do not wish in any way to depreciate the efforts and the sacrifice of those devoted gentlemen and ladies who gave up everything in voluntary service for the cause which they had at heart, and only too often lost their health and



their lives also in days when we had not yet learned how to cope with the deadly enemy malaria, which sooner or later exacted the grim penalty from all the pioneers in Africa. No people could be inspired by nobler sentiments. The doubt which did present itself to me as an observer was whether the results obtained under their system were commensurate with the effort and the self-sacrifice which they entailed.

Besides these special functions there was the supervision of the various branches of the local administration; the suppression of smuggling, especially that of hasheesh; the constant vigilance necessary to prevent the sale of liquor or arms to the natives, and the introduction of the latter without licence into the island. Gun-running on the mainland was so profitable that the greatest ingenuity was displayed in evading control, and some of our own people were not above suspicion. Petitions had to be received and considered, complaints listened to, and constant interviews accorded. In addition to the duty of keeping the home Government informed on every matter, there was a constant correspondence with the administrators of the British East Africa Company, which was evidently nearing the end of its tether, and by its unwillingness to incur any new expenditure and maintain adequate forces in the great area which it had undertaken to open up, was compromising the security of those regions.

For all these services, and to meet exceptional emergencies, the available personnel seemed strangely inadequate. The staff at the Agency consisted of a Consul, Lieut. Smith (an ex-naval officer), and two Vice-Consuls, Mr. (now Sir) Basil Cave and Mr. Cornish. There was a well-organized office with Parsee clerks and excellent interpreters. Then there were Mathews and Hatch, with Strickland at the Customs, and one or two other Englishmen who worked under the Government. From the revenue of the islands, the main source of which was the clove-duty, collected in kind, it was difficult to squeeze a little surplus when the

Sultan's civil list and the salaries had been paid, to apply to general purposes. This little group of Englishmen, acting under the much-abused Foreign Office, and using native and in a few cases Indian instruments, held on tenaciously to a precarious position in East Africa with no material force behind them except for the two or three light cruisers or gunboats on the station. It was anxious work maintaining the somewhat nebulous Protectorate with little save prestige and infinite assurance. But the Navy always saved us, as the rest of my story of East Africa will show. Those who now contemplate the promising colonies which have grown up in these regions in subsequent years little realize the conditions with which we had to contend before they were definitely incorporated in the Imperial system, and I do not think that justice has altogether been done to the part played by the Foreign Office in upholding the flag against heavy odds until the time was ripe for the Colonial Office to step in with all the resources of the Treasury behind it.

My difficulties with the Sultan began almost immediately over a necessary reduction of the civil list. The unfortunate ruler was himself continually cheated, especially in regard to the pay lists of the soldiers maintained by the Arab governors and dignitaries. Claims would be put in for fifty where only five were effective, the remainder being merely for show on pay days. The ships which he insisted on retaining were run at a heavy loss with good profits to agents in Bombay. It was impossible not to feel considerable sympathy for him, as pressure was continually exercised upon him by the dominant Arab class to oppose the innovations and reforms which the Protectorate *régime* had rendered inevitable. They foresaw the ultimate end of domestic slavery also with the process of time, and believed that without the labour which it ensured the gathering of the clove crop would be impossible. Its relatively rapid extinction could have been secured by registration of all the existing domestic slaves in the islands, but opinion at



home was not favourable to what would have been tantamount to an official recognition of a status which was only tolerated under protest. Things had become very difficult for Mathews, who generally acted as intermediary, and it was necessary for me to arm myself with a very strong instruction from home, the terms of which I suggested, in the form of a message from the Prime Minister. The Sultan had been seriously ill, and an indication of the gravity of his condition was conveyed to me in the requests for interviews which I now began to receive from the various claimants to the succession. The arrival at that moment of a German naval squadron was not particularly welcome, but the coincidence was, I think, accidental. As soon as the Sultan was reported to have resumed his normal life, I asked for an audience, and was informed that he was still too unwell to receive me. A few days later a similar answer was returned to a similar request. Meanwhile, I had reason to know that he was holding councils. I therefore sent a message, conveyed with all the due formalities of Oriental address, to explain that, greatly as I regretted his indisposition, it was urgently necessary that I should see him, and I should therefore go to the Palace on the following morning and remain there until I had done so. It was not without misgivings that I started next day ceremoniously with all the Agency guards, but I felt convinced that I could count on his reluctance to offer a rebuff to the representative of the Protecting Power. The grasping of the nettle was successful, as not only did the Sultan receive me, but he listened in good part to the unwelcome message which I had to deliver and promised that there should be no further reason for complaint. It was, however, obvious to me that if at that moment not more than usually incapacitated, Seyyid Ali was a very sick man.

Having formed this diagnosis I was confronted with a serious dilemma. Information reached me early in February from the East Africa Company's headquarters at Mombasa

that the Ogaden Somalis in the hinterland of Kismayu were assuming a very threatening attitude. Kismayu was full of Somalis. It lay some 400 miles north, almost on the Equator, and was in charge of a very young Scotchman, Mr. Todd, who had only one British assistant. Except for a few of the Company's native troops for police duty it was undefended. The Somali chiefs were coming in to submit their grievances, and it would be desirable to send a vessel to the spot in order to exercise a moral effect at this meeting. Captain Campbell, whom I consulted, at once despatched the gunboat *Widgeon*. But a subsequent telegram from Mombasa described the situation at Kismayu as very serious, and I had to make up my mind whether it was safe to weaken the position at Zanzibar by removing a second warship of the three available and to go myself, taking the chance that during a few days' absence the Sultan's malady would not make rapid progress. There was a land telegraph line from Mombasa to Lamu, about a hundred miles further north, but after that the only communication with Kismayu was by boat. I decided in favour of the most pressing and obvious duty. Captain Campbell took me in his fast cruiser, calling at Mombasa to pick up the Company's Administrator, Mr. Piggott. On our arrival we found that the crisis had already taken place. The *Widgeon* had fortunately arrived before the Somali chiefs assembled for the council. The Commander, who had only a small ship's company, landed a party of Marines. But the Company's Agent, who had instructions to abstain from all provocation, desired that they should not appear when the Somali headmen, some fifty or sixty in number, came in, wishing to avoid any appearance of menace. The Marines were, therefore, consigned to a room adjoining the verandah where the Council was to take place. Count Giovanni Lovatelli, a Lieutenant in the Italian Navy, who had been making a voyage of exploration and inspection in what is now Italian Somaliland, had just come to Kismayu, and was staying with Mr. Todd. He went



with the latter to the meeting, followed by Mr. Farrant, the assistant. What then took place must have been, I think, premeditated, for hardly had Mr. Todd begun to address the assembly before the nearest Somali jumped up and struck him across the head with his sword, cutting him down. Lovatelli stepped across his body and, drawing a revolver, shot the first three or four who followed up the assailant, and Mr. Farrant, who had a Winchester rifle at hand, also opened fire. Hearing the shots the Marines rushed in at the charge and the Somalis dropped from the balcony and fled. But some eleven were killed, a considerable number of whom were accounted for by Lovatelli, who acted with the greatest coolness and gallantry. The Somalis, probably reinforced by others waiting in the neighbourhood as well as from the native settlement at Kismayu, reassembled and had to be dispersed by shrapnel from the *Widgeon*. They then retired into the open country and their village was abandoned. Todd, though severely wounded, was not in actual danger. I could not help feeling rather indignant with the East Africa Company for the situation which they had allowed to develop at Kismayu. They had left a young man of about four-and-twenty, with little experience, to deal with a notoriously truculent branch of the Somali people, with whom a fictitious peace had only been maintained by money payments. Every Somali who is bribed creates another applicant for a similar subvention. Todd had been alone there for fourteen months with no force to speak of, and could only deal with conditions for which he was not responsible to the best of his ability. He had received no reply to any of his communications for two months until the day before the attack took place. After he was wounded he had even to pay twenty-five rupees for the telegram sent to his family to reassure them. It was now necessary to take immediate measures to place the station in a state of defence. The Company undertook to maintain 200 *Askari*, native troops, and we were able to hand over to

them some Kiriboto Arab irregulars, who were in Zanzibar and not wanted there. I then issued a proclamation, without too minute an inquiry into legalities, ordering every able-bodied man in Kismayu to co-operate for a certain number of hours a day in building a stockade under the superintendence of the naval officers. The general response was satisfactory. But a number of the Indian traders established there came in a deputation and showed me their soft little hands, which were, they pleaded, and with justification, incapable of manual labour. I admitted the plea, but insisted on their paying a money contribution to defray the extra labour entailed by their disability on those who could work at the defences. The *Widgeon* was to remain until the native troops arrived. Lovatelli returned with me. At Mombasa, where we stopped to drop the Administrator, I received a telegram informing me that Cecil Rhodes was arriving in Zanzibar, and I sent instructions for his entertainment pending my return. His second period at Oxford had coincided with my residence there.

It was characteristic of Rhodes, who stayed with me the best part of a week awaiting a steamer to Durban, that he should at once have made a rapid investigation of the conditions and possibilities of the Protectorate in his own penetrating way. Some four-fifths of the clove production of the world is grown in these islands. The obvious thing for us to do, he said, was to establish a state monopoly in cloves. Unfortunately, as I explained to him, this could not be contemplated under a capitulatory *régime* which gave us no power over foreign subjects, even if the Berlin and Brussels Acts had not definitely excluded the introduction of monopolies. As he was curious to see the Sultan, I arranged for an audience. For obvious reasons we always treated His Highness with a great deal of ceremony. To my dismay, when the moment came to start for the Palace, Rhodes turned up in an old brown coat and a not unstained pair of flannel trousers. I suggested some more formal integument, but he had nothing smarter in his limited



travelling wardrobe. However, the name of Rhodes was a power in Africa, and was even known among the Arabs of Zanzibar, so that he could afford to be exceptional. He expressed a wish to send a letter and papers to Uganda to his brother, and when I explained that the Company's runners had ceased to go, and that to send a party with the necessary rations for the journey would cost from £150 to £200, he at once authorized me to do so at his expense, if the State would not defray the cost of a mail. I have among my autographs a letter of Cecil Rhodes, giving me authority to draw upon him for such sum as I might consider necessary. We exhausted many subjects in those few days, and I wished that my arrears of work had left me more time. But his ship came punctually, and a pleasant visit ended. It was the last time I saw him.

Lovatelli, who was the nephew of an old Roman friend, the Duke of Sermoneta, remained with me for some weeks, and it was a great pleasure to have that very gallant sailor and genial companion as my guest. He was to render us a further notable service later.

My last visit with Rhodes to the Sultan had convinced me, so far as a layman could judge from the outer appearance of a sick man, that he had not long to live, and this judgment was confirmed by that of those who were in the closest relations with him. I, therefore, now made arrangements with Captain Campbell, who was always most helpful in falling in with all suggestions, that a signalman should be constantly stationed day and night at the Agency who, by means of flags in the day-time and lamps after dark, could convey an immediate message to the warships. "Number One" of the *Philomel*, Lieutenant Grenfell, made all the necessary preparations for landing at a moment's notice should it be necessary, and Hatch worked out a plan of campaign for the concentration of the local forces and police at all the danger points in the city. It was essential to be ready for any emergency. But it is tedious work waiting for the hour that no man knoweth, especially

when it involves detaining in expectancy those who have many other duties to perform in the routine of service.

So long as one kept in health, and until the south-west monsoon brought the great rains which confined every one to the house for all but a few hours a day, life was not without its charm in the tropical island, but some one member or another of our small community was constantly down with malaria. The sinister activities of the *anopheles* mosquito had not yet been discovered, and except for the provision of nets round our beds, without which sleep would not have been possible, no one paid much attention to the swarms of insects which infested the steamy air. The best moments of all were the moonlit nights when the fore-shore scents at low tide were not too strong, or the very early morning on the verandah, with a breakfast of fresh-gathered pineapple and iced green cocoanut, when the smell of the copra carried out to the lighters by black boys and girls, who waded waist-deep into the sea, had not yet grown too all-pervading. The Sultan had his own ice factory, from which he kept me constantly supplied, except when, as it occasionally would, the engine broke down. My early breakfast was always enlivened by the presence of two or three little monkeys, which had grown so tame that I left them free to climb over the palms in the garden, whence they returned to the verandah for their daily plate of rice. At times, too, there were wonderful evening effects, when green rays radiating from the low sun on the western horizon intersected the red of the sky like jade sticks in a crimson fan. In the afternoons when there was not too great a pressure of work, I rode on a pony which I had taken over from Portal, through the native villages and farms with their opulent mango groves and banana plantations, or visited one of the country palaces, built by successive Sultans in the days of extravagance. These were generally neglected and falling into ruin, for no Sultan cared to occupy the house of a predecessor. Periodical excitement was afforded by the passage of a new warship or the arrival



of a mail. Of the latter we had nominally three in the month. The British India, the Messageries and the German East African steamers called. But, as some timed their departure by the day of the week and some by the day of the month, there was a point in the year when they arrived almost together and a month's correspondence would be received in a week.

On the evening of Sunday, March the 5th, Captain Charles Campbell, the Senior Naval Officer, Commander Lindley, of H.M.S. *Blanche*, General Hatch, Count Lovatelli, and two or three others were dining with me at the Agency. We had nearly finished dinner and had reached the inevitable ice, when I was told that the Sultan's private secretary was without and must see me at once. Leaving the table, I found one Abdul Aziz, notorious even in Zanzibar as an intriguer, with streaming eyes, trembling like an aspen. He told me that Seyyid Ali had just died suddenly, that the report of his death had instantaneously run through the city and that the rival pretenders were collecting their respective followers to dispute possession of the Palace. He was, he said, in fear of his life and begged me to protect him. The crucial moment had therefore come. Hatch, whose task it was to protect the foreign consulates, to close the approaches to the Palace and prevent looting, disappeared in an instant, while a messenger was sent to Mathews. Captain Campbell gave the necessary instructions to the signalman on the roof to flash an urgent message to the *Philomel* and the *Blanche*, from which all available men with machine-guns were to be landed at once in the Custom House. They were not to show themselves until I arrived on the spot and gave the signal, when Captain Campbell would take charge should any operations prove necessary. A guard of Marines was to land at once at the Agency and march with us to the Palace. Vice-Consul Cave was placed in charge of the Agency, where a few Marines were left to give backbone to the native guards, and all the ladies were to be brought there forthwith. Fortunately,

it was a still night and there was a moon. It must have been just about 9 p.m. when the news reached me, and the bluejackets had for the most part already turned in for the night. Our Marines were ashore in about ten minutes. In the interval I had just had time to issue the necessary instructions, discard my mess-jacket and buckle on my revolver. Meanwhile, Lovatelli had started off alone to reconnoitre and report. We then set out for the Palace, Captain Campbell and I leading the procession, followed by the Marines. Mathews, I felt sure, was already on the spot. On the way, an emissary from Hamed bin Thwain met me to ask what his master should do. I told him to remain quietly in his house till he was sent for, and that if he did so all would be well with him.

As we came in sight of the Palace it was evident that we were none too soon. The Sultan's Persian Guard, drawn up on the left side of the square, had their guns pointing towards us, and the gunners standing by their pieces ready to fire. Adherents of the rival pretenders, with all the arms they could muster, had already collected in considerable numbers, and Mathews was moving among them exhorting them to remain calm. But Seyyid Khaled had been admitted by the dead Sultan's sister through a back entrance into the Palace, and was actually in possession. The air was full of cries. The one preoccupation on my mind for the first moment was as to how Hatch's men would behave. Fortunately, he had them well in hand and dispersed on various duties.

The Custom House entrance was nearly opposite the Palace. The concerted signal was given, and just as we drew up the great gates swung open and nearly 200 bluejackets, who had been in their hammocks a quarter of an hour before, marched out in field equipment with their machine-guns, under Lieutenant A. B. G. Grenfell. They quietly took possession of the Palace square, firmly pressing the crowds back towards the roads of egress, beyond which were Hatch's Askari. A gun in the crowd went off,



accidentally it would seem, but from the moment the Navy appeared on the scene it was clear to every one that the Protecting Power had taken charge. The captain of the Persian Guard came up saluting, and said that he would take his orders from General Mathews. So far so good. But the massive Palace doors were closed, and in answer to a summons to open them a voice from within replied that Seyyid Khaled had given orders that no one was to be admitted. At my request, Captain Campbell then brought a gun into position in front of the entrance and I took out my watch. Mathews, on my behalf, informed those within that five minutes' grace would be allowed, at the expiration of which if the doors were not opened they would be blown down. The time had almost expired when one side was opened a few inches, and a voice from behind it said that the British Agent could enter, but that he must come alone. Our answer was to push the door open wide, and I rushed in with Mathews, Campbell, and a dozen Marines. For a moment it looked as if the staircase would be held against us, but the sight of the Marines brought wisdom. Khaled then appeared, and after rebuking him for endangering the peace of the island I told him he was to consider himself under arrest, and he was marched off with a guard of Marines to his own house. Meanwhile, Hatch had done his outpost work admirably. His patrols had the whole city under supervision and had taken effective measures, by superintending the closing of the shops and taverns, to prevent any of the looting and violence which was traditional on the death of a Sultan.

The local situation being now well in hand, Seyyid Hamed bin Thwain was sent for. He had acted as advised and had remained quietly in his own quarters, suspecting perhaps, but as yet unconscious of what was in store for him. With him, and Mathews and the interpreter, I withdrew to one of the inner rooms. Everything in the Palace seemed to have disappeared, and only a small petroleum hand-lamp could be found for us to work by.

I then explained to him that as representative of the Protecting Power I was prepared to ensure him the succession to the Sultanate, provided he would agree to my conditions. These had all been carefully thought out and prepared in advance. They were of a nature to define more precisely the situation created by the Protectorate, and laid down clearly what was to be left to the administration with special provisions regulating domestic slavery. Hamed bin Thwain was an intelligent man and a student of Arab history and literature. He found little difficulty in agreeing to the conditions proposed to him, only inviting further explanation on certain points. He swore on the Koran to maintain the engagements which he had taken, and these were formally recorded in a document drafted in the uncertain light of the petroleum lamp. I then saluted him as Sultan. The naval companies had now formed a smaller square in front of the Palace doors, and the populace was allowed to circulate freely in the remaining area, which was thronged with spectators. It was past midnight when we descended to the verandah in front of the entrance, and there the new Sultan was solemnly proclaimed amid the acclamations of the crowd. Within an hour, according to local custom, the body of the late Sultan was buried without ceremony under a date palm. All being now quiet, a sufficient force was left to patrol and I returned to the Agency to draft a telegram to the Foreign Office recording the events of this memorable evening. The ladies of the staff were still there, but no demonstrations had taken place in our quarter, and after a little supper and mutual congratulations the party separated. I got to bed for a few hours at about 3 a.m., tolerably satisfied with the night's work. It had been a very anxious moment, as but for our timely intervention and the clockwork precision with which all the arrangements had been carried out, the adherents of the three rival pretenders would undoubtedly have sought a settlement by arms, the city would have been a scene of lawlessness, heavy losses would have been



incurred by the paralysation of business and pillage, and numerous foreign claims for compensation would have been advanced. This, indeed, did happen some years later when, on the death of Sultan Hamed, Khaled once more obtained possession of the Palace and had to be shelled out of it.

The following morning at ten the new Sultan held his first official reception, at which the staff of the Agency, the members of the Government, and the officers of the two cruisers were present. During the ceremony his flag was hoisted and saluted by guns of the cruisers. The next day I presented all the Consuls of the Foreign Powers. It was the desire of the Sultan to be reconciled with his young cousin, and as Khaled's partisans had all disappeared or made their submission, he was restored to his position after due warning that his future conduct would be carefully watched. Seyyid Mahmoud was an amiable and pacific person who would give no trouble. A deputation from the Indian merchants in Zanzibar presented me with an address expressing their gratitude for the effective measures which had been taken for the preservation of peace and order, and I was gratified to receive a letter in the same sense from the Chamber of Commerce, to which the signatures of the leading French firms were affixed. But the greatest satisfaction of all was the telegram which I received from Lord Rosebery, "entirely approving" all that had been done on that occasion.

Nothing could have been more satisfactory than the attitude of the new Sultan in those early days. He made a public declaration to his Arab subjects to the effect that he was completely at one with the Protecting Power. He entertained us at dinner not long after his accession, and on that occasion for the first time in his life ate with a knife and fork, declaring that he thought the process much cleaner than the Arab habit. I was much impressed with an observation which he made while speaking of the different customs of different countries. He said: "The wise men

who made the law, Christ and Mohammed, lived a very long time ago, and made the law according to their lights. But they did not know many things that we know now, and the world has moved on farther since their law was made." I found him quite readily disposed to grant the Italian Government a lease of the Benadir ports, north of Kismayu and the Juba, which was, in the first instance, to cover a tentative period of three years. With this arrangement the whole of the East African coast over which the Sultans of Zanzibar had exercised sovereignty passed under European control.

An episode now occurred which gave public demonstration of the abusive use of the French flag by Arab dhow-owners. There was reason to suspect that a number of kidnapped children had been placed on board a dhow of considerable dimensions which was preparing to sail north as soon as the south-west monsoon broke. But our naval officers had no powers, even in territorial waters, to do more than verify the ship's papers and the title to fly the French flag. Captain Campbell despatched a boat with one of his officers to do so. The papers were quite in order, and the party were about to withdraw when one of the blue-jackets caught his foot in the ring of a bolt and, tripping, pulled up the hatch with it as he fell. Whereupon a number of little black arms were thrust up into the light. Here was a case of the *délit flagrant* which a "lucky accident" had revealed. Word was at once sent to the French consulate and meanwhile the boat stood by. The dhow was sequestered, the crew were arrested by the French consul, and the children were taken off and provided for. As his jurisdiction did not empower him to deal with slave traders, they were transferred by the first opportunity to Réunion, to be tried by a higher Court. To my surprise and indignation these men were eventually acquitted. The reason for this miscarriage of justice was a simple one, which explains if it does not excuse. There was no doubt as to the facts, and the guilt of the accused was patent.



But the French criminal code only prescribed one penalty, namely death, for slave trading. As our courts, and those of other countries imposed relatively mild sentences of two or three years' imprisonment for similar offences, no French jury could be induced to give a verdict which must entail the death sentence. The result was, however, most disappointing, and calculated to encourage the subterfuge resorted to by these scourges of humanity to obtain the French flag.

I exchanged visits with Freiherr von Scheele, the Governor of German East Africa. The headquarters of his administration at the attractive port of Dar-es-Salam were imposing and constructed with careful consideration of every detail. It was too early in the history of the colony for conspicuous evidence of general progress, and the officials complained of the reluctance of the home government to make adequate provision for their projects and developments. But already the cemetery with its large number of European graves was a tragic reminder of the toll of death among the pioneers in East Africa. I had several issues of neighbourship to discuss with the Governor. Some of the subordinate employees in Dar-es-Salam were in the habit of coming over to Zanzibar for a few days' holiday, and, away from discipline in a centre where they were ex-territorial, they availed themselves of the opportunity to "paint the town red." Our native police had been victims of an unfortunate series of acts of violence.

At Dar-es-Salam, of all places in the world, I was surprised by a literary revelation, which would alone have repaid me for the visit. While discussing the peculiar genius of Heine with the assistant governor at dinner, he told me that his family possessed the manuscript of an unpublished lyric by the poet of the sardonic smile. He had a copy of it which I transcribed and also committed to memory. It was the poem which begins:—"*Sie Floh vor mir wie ein Reh so schön*," and it was entirely new to me. But if he was correct in describing it as at

that time unpublished, it has since been included in later editions.

I noticed that a very different relation existed in the colony between the German authorities and the natives from that which prevailed in Zanzibar. There was much saluting and standing to attention and the Africans bowed down to the ground when they met a German officer. When I went for a walk in Zanzibar, the Arabs gave the salaam with dignified courtesy, and the black folks would come up with smiling faces to shake hands. There was a sense of patriarchal and friendly conditions which I felt was the right one to maintain. On the other hand, I understand that the Germans in penetrating into the interior were less disposed than we have been to interfere with local habits and traditions and refrained from trying to impose western ethics on a primitive people. It must be acknowledged that experience in East Africa during the Great War showed that they had been successful in keeping the native populations loyal to their administration. Herr von Scheele soon afterwards returned my visit and stayed with me a day or two at Zanzibar.

It was about this time that I had my first bad attack of malarial fever and found myself reduced to a condition of physical weakness new to my experience. A particularly disagreeable after-effect was the manifestation of a large number of eruptive centres over my back, through which the poison seemed to be making its way to the surface. Fortunately for me the Cape Squadron, to which the vessels detached for duty on the East Coast belonged, came in on its annual cruise soon after the fever subsided, and Admiral Bedford, to whom I can never sufficiently testify my gratitude, took me away in his flag-ship, the *Raleigh*. This and its sister vessel the *Boadicea* were the last masted battleships in the Royal Navy, and could still make a brave show under canvas. The naval surgeon operated daily on my volcanic back, and the clean sea air, together no doubt with elimination for a time of any further



mosquito inoculation, the disastrous effects of which we did not then suspect, quickly restored me to health. I discussed the slave-traffic question and the control of territorial waters very fully with the Admiral, who submitted his views to the Admiralty. Some time would elapse before an answer could be received, and meanwhile he proposed to go southward, and up country to pay a visit to Nyasaland, after which he would return to Zanzibar. It was during this cruise, while we were lying off Mombasa, that a telegram brought us the terrible news of the sinking of Admiral Tryon's flagship the *Victoria*, off the Syrian coast. It fell like a thunderbolt, for every rating had friends and contemporaries on board.

With the breaking of the south-west monsoon the great rains began, and the corrugated iron roofs which abounded over the godowns along the sea front reverberated with the drumming of the tropic downpour. There was only, as a rule, a brief respite in the afternoon for some three or four hours out of the twenty-four. The narrow streets became watercourses, and though the thermometer did not fall many degrees the air felt almost chill. Cigars and cigarettes were served on hot plates. Steel turned black, and leather, unless constantly watched and dried, grew mouldy.

I was now confronted with a number of problems which the growing disillusion and exhaustion of the British East Africa Company rendered urgent. It was evident that their abandonment of Uganda would be followed by further withdrawals and their hold over the country which they administered was growing progressively weaker. Letters received from Portal on the march did not report very favourably on their limited penetration, and I was far from satisfied with the reports received from Kismayu. There was no hope of support from home to make good their insufficiency. We could carry on so long as no demands were made on the Treasury. A little later I did make an

urgent appeal to be allowed to recruit some Punjabi Mohammedans for police duties in the Protectorate. I was very jealous of Johnston when a detachment of magnificent Sikhs landed at Zanzibar on their way to join him in Nyasaland. But the Secretary of State for India was not to be moved. Had there been a small but efficient force available to place at a moment's notice wherever its services were required, we might have been spared later, after I had left Zanzibar, a costly expedition entailing the despatch of several regiments from India to put down a rebellion on the mainland. But in those days we had to make bricks without straw. Such as they were they have served for a foundation.

The British East Africa Company had certainly seen little return for all the capital they had sunk in a great adventure, and already hints had reached me that the total abandonment of the enterprise was being discussed, and that the question of compensation for the work accomplished would be raised. I read with alarm a memorandum contending that Zanzibar should be able, if it resumed entire responsibility for the coast, to furnish out of prospective profits, which the company itself had not been able to realize, 320,000 rupees a year for interest on a loan to be raised to pay off the shareholders. Another suggestion that the £200,000 paid to Sultan Barghash for the coastal area of the German colony should be affected to compensation was bitterly resented by us on the spot who knew how advantageously this capital might have been utilized for local development. The concession to the Company had been given by the Sultan of his own free-will for no consideration, and if it was to be surrendered the most which could be reasonably asked of the Protectorate Government was the purchase of such assets as had an economic value. It was quite legitimate to argue that the aims of its founders had been philanthropic as well as commercial, and it was indeed evident that from an imperial point of view a great service had been rendered by the



Company in opening up regions which would have fallen into other hands had they been left derelict. But the sentimental claim would lie against Great Britain, and it was not easy to make out any case for indemnification by the Zanzibar Government.

## CHAPTER X

### ZANZIBAR AND EAST AFRICA, 1893

Admiral Bedford returned in due course from Nyasaland full of the prospects of that colony, which was responding to the enterprise of its energetic governor. While he was travelling with the governor there marched in one evening to their camp a small white individual, attired like a figure in a child's Noah's Ark, accompanied by four porters carrying packs. On inspection they realized that the new arrival was a lady, who proved to be of Austrian nationality. She had started months before from the Cape, and contemplated marching on northwards to Cairo, an enterprise which in 1893 no one had as yet attempted. Every effort was made to dissuade her from proceeding with the very inadequate resources at her command. There were still great tracts of unexplored country lying to the north. She was warned that she would have to traverse regions where cannibalism was believed to prevail, and others probably impassable owing to physical conditions. She would undoubtedly be stripped of her few possessions and risk dying of hunger. Even if by some miracle she should reach the Egyptian Soudan, she would find herself in the Mahdi's country, from which no European had then returned.<sup>1</sup> But nothing daunted the gallant little lady. She was, she said, neither young nor beautiful nor rich. Why should anyone interfere with her? So the next morning she left to continue her solitary march towards the unknown. Had she ever reached her destination a

<sup>1</sup> It was about this time that Father Ohrwalder escaped from Omdurman.



book would no doubt have been written and the world would have known her adventures. I was myself in Cairo about a twelvemonth later, and remained there for eight years. I should certainly have heard of the arrival of an Austrian lady from the south. She must, I fear, have been the first victim among the pioneers of the Cape to Cairo route. I never learned her name. Within thirty years of that date Messrs. Cook & Son have announced the organization of a personally conducted tour for fourteen persons from the Cape to Cairo.

The Admiralty had shown a disposition to uphold the right of examining dhows in the harbours and territorial waters of Zanzibar. A French warship under the command of Admiral Richard appeared in the roadstead to make it clear that France did not accept this view, and after Admiral Bedford's return the two vessels eyed each other "like the basilisk," until our Government decided that it was not opportune to press the point, whereupon the hatchet was thrown overboard with due exchanges of hospitality.

The most urgent of the problems which now confronted me and entailed my once more having to appeal for naval assistance, arose from the decision of the British East Africa Company to withdraw from the territory of Witu, a region between the Tana river and the sea, behind the port and island of Lamu, about a hundred miles north of Mombasa. At the time when a charter was granted to the Company, Witu formed part of a German Protectorate, which extended northwards to the Kismayu district. The company had continually urged upon H.M. Government the inconveniences of this arrangement, and eventually by the agreement concluded in 1890, it passed to Great Britain. Attempts at penetration had given the Germans nothing but trouble, and their successors had the same experience. Some German settlers had been murdered just before the transfer took place, and the whole region was so disturbed and insecure that a naval expedition

under Admiral Fremantle, accompanied by some troops from Zanzibar, landed and advanced up to the town of Witu, which was bombarded and subsequently occupied. The unruly elements abandoned the more accessible areas and retired into the impenetrable forest without making any resistance. In March, 1891, the Company took over the country in virtue of their charter, and bound themselves to establish an efficient administration. The question of sovereignty over territory for which local Sultans claimed independence was left for future consideration.

The settlements in the neighbourhood of Witu and the road leading to the Tana river and Kipini on the coast were policed by a force of sepoy which the Indian Government had allowed the Company to engage for a limited time. But these, originally 250 in number, had through sickness and discharges now dwindled down to less than a hundred. In any case their contracts expired on the 1st June, and none were willing to re-engage. The outlaws had built themselves stockaded villages in the unexplored forest, where raiding and selling slaves to the Somalis became their occupation. Many of these were themselves runaway slaves from Lamu who had in turn become slave owners and dealers. Under the leadership of a brother of a former so-called Sultan of Witu they defied all authority. This Fumo Omari had in 1891 received a sum of 4,000 rupees from the Company to rebuild Witu, where a large house had been constructed for him to occupy under administrative supervision. But he never carried out his engagements.

The only points which could be urged in favour of the outlaws were first, that they had been given to understand that a small force of *Askaris* would be stationed at Witu, and that they claimed to regard the introduction of 250 Indian soldiers as a menace and breach of faith, and secondly, that as the Company continued to receive in trade the produce which they extracted from the rubber vines in



the forest, these commercial relations seemed to imply acquiescence in their autonomous status.

Owing to the persistent raids of the outlaws much of the mainland country had fallen out of cultivation, the owners retiring for security to the islands. They disposed of about a thousand rifles and had repulsed some plucky attempts of the Company's officers to approach their strongholds. Insolent letters from Fumo Omari, demanding the release of raiders who had been apprehended, were addressed to the Administration in such terms as the following:—"Between this and Witu there is no sea. Let me know if you and I are to be at peace no longer. My arm is long and not short. I know no man with whom I would go to law. As soon as you read my letter release my people."

In May of 1893 the directors informed the Foreign Office that they did not intend to replace the Indian police and requested the Government to take their own measures for the security of Witu. They asserted their right to terminate the agreement of 1891, in which they had undertaken to administer the country, and now proposed to withdraw from it altogether. At the same time they announced their intention to retain Lamu, which gives access to Witu. Nor did they contemplate leaving Kisimayu. The intervening country neither the Company nor the Germans before them had even attempted to penetrate or administer. Though the claim to denounce the agreement was contested by the Foreign Office, and in any case the right of free entry and transit through Lamu was claimed under the Brussels Act, the Company was no longer in a position to maintain its obligations, and the date of withdrawal was fixed for the 31st July, up to which the Indian police agreed to remain. The evacuation of this region would have entailed the total ruin of the population which, confiding in the Company's protection, had remained in the controlled area.

I consequently received instructions to take over the

country, making all necessary provisions for its pacification and the restoration of order. It would have been useless at that time to ask Parliament for any credit to administer a region of which most of its members had never heard, and yet it was impossible to abandon the inhabitants who had stood by us to the vengeance of the forest outlaws. Witu was, therefore, to be placed under the authority of the Sultan of Zanzibar to whom the administration was nominally delegated. The Protectorate was, however, not to be incorporated in his dominions. As Zanzibar was itself a British Protectorate this meant, translated into cruder terms, that Witu would henceforth be governed by us, but that Zanzibar would pay for it. We were driven to hard expedients in those days to maintain our precarious tenure in East Africa.

Meanwhile, the first step was to establish our authority there. In so doing I was directed if possible to avoid the use of force. But we were practically certain to be attacked and therefore I had to apply for a landing party from the ships to accompany me.

Admiral Bedford himself expected shortly to return southwards. But he gave me every assistance and issued all necessary instructions to the future Senior Naval Officer, Commander Lindley. The *Philomel*, had already left Zanzibar, taking my former coadjutor, Captain Charles Campbell, who had been for some time out of health and badly needed a change of climate. The *Blanche* and the *Swallow* were left on the station with the little *Sparrow*. Meanwhile the *Raleigh* remained off Zanzibar as long as possible to watch events during my absence.

I greatly regretted that the gallant admiral was not to go with us. He had, I think, in his mind that too much fuss had been made over a former expedition to Witu. The next time I had news of the *Raleigh*, Bedford was on the west coast conducting a punitive expedition after the Benin massacres. Her landing party was badly ambushed in a country apparently not unlike that into which we



were about to penetrate, and two of my friends in the wardroom were killed there. The circumstances of the savage murders in Benin attracted more attention at home than was usually accorded to happenings in remote Africa, and I well remember a curious example of the effect they produced on the popular mind. The maid of a lady who gave us the story was, while manipulating the hair-brush, deploring the tragic news published in the evening papers, and expressed her surprise that such horrors could be perpetrated by Christian people. "But what makes you think," her mistress asked, "that these savages were Christians?" "Surely, my lady, they must have been," was the reply, "because they crucified people."

The preparations for our expedition were made with great secrecy as I desired our arrival to be a surprise to the outlaws. There was, as I have mentioned, a land telegraph line along the coast from Mombasa to Witu. Some little time before we were ready, Mathews came in one morning looking particularly wise and cheerful to report that telegraphic communication with Lamu had broken down, and it was supposed that an elephant had knocked away some of the poles. I had never heard of elephants in that district, but could only welcome a "fortunate accident," which curiously enough coincided with a temporary interruption of the direct cable home, compelling recourse to the Cape exchange which on grounds of expense was only to be used very exceptionally. At the last moment the departure of a number of native troops and three warships for Lamu was bound to become public property, and several of the British in Zanzibar asked to be allowed to accompany us as correspondents. But I decided against any unnecessary additions to the party, as all provisions and ammunition had to be carried on the heads of porters. Their absence perhaps accounts for the fact that the second Witu expedition is little known in the history of East Africa.

I travelled to Lamu with a connexion of the Sultan, Seyyid Serham-bin-Nassur, who came as his representative,

in H.M.S. *Blanche*, which, thanks to the efficiency of her Number One, Lieutenant (now Admiral) Le Marchant Hutchison, was one of the smartest vessels in which I have ever cruised. The *Swallow* and *Sparrow* accompanied us. The Zanzibar Government ship *Barawa* brought Mathews and Hatch with one hundred and twenty five *Askaris* and fifty Soudanese recruited at Mombasa from those that had come down from Uganda. These last were as cheerful as they were black, and first-class fighting men. Stores had been embarked not only for the expedition but also for any garrisons which it might be necessary to establish.

The entrance to Lamu, with its narrow channel and a shallow bar which could only be negotiated at high tide, demands very careful navigation. The gulf is quite landlocked and its shores luxuriant with tropical vegetation. It was a trading station for a number of Indian merchants. I at once despatched letters from the Sultan of Zanzibar and from myself to the principal chiefs of the region, inviting them to co-operate in pacification and to come either to the coast or to Witu town to discuss matters. The next three days were spent in the collection of porters and the packing of loads, and here Mathews displayed a real genius for African organization. This gave me time to look into matters at Lamu, where I discovered that the rules of the Brussels Act prohibiting the introduction of spirits were being violated by an ingenious method. German alcohol was, in fact, being sold freely in the bazaar to natives under the disguise of Eau-de-Cologne, and was used for internal application only. The well-known matchwood cases of six bottles had all the orthodox indications of authenticity. The paper wrapper with its advertisement of the famous scent in three languages was duly wrapped round each of the six. The liquid had even a light perfume, and there was little to excite suspicion except the price, which was only twopence a bottle retail. Inquiries made, however, left no doubt as to the illicit nature of this traffic.



I therefore ordered all the "Eau-de-Cologne" in the bazaar to be brought into camp and there had it publicly destroyed. I suppose it was a high-handed proceeding, but the purveyors of the poison had no doubts as to the use which was made of it, and though one of them afterwards advanced a claim for compensation, which was ignored, the majority were probably glad to get off with no severer punishment.

At Lamu, I witnessed a curious dance, if it may be so called, unlike any which I have seen before or since. Sixteen girls, lightly attired in one or two coloured handkerchiefs of the design for the moment in fashion, stood immovable in four rows of four, with one hand slightly raised and the other on the hip. When the tom-tom players began to beat the drums with a repeating rhythmic measure, the girls, still perfectly rigid in all the rest of their bodies, drew themselves slowly forward by a muscular action of their flexible toes. After thus progressing for a few feet or yards they stopped, turned round on their heels and repeated the process in the other direction, keeping station and formation with perfect precision. The tom-toms beat ever more vigorously as the slow lines advanced, and the sensibilities of the spectators were evidently roused to fever pitch by this strange performance, which was apparently sensual and not ritual in character.

On the 23rd and 24th July, we embarked in two sections in all the ships' boats available, to penetrate through creeks and tortuous channels to Mkonumbi, the nearest point to Witu which could be reached by water. The channels, bordered by uncanny mangrove trees, which thrust out their spreading roots into the water like black arms with bent fingers clutching at the slimy bottom, were, I believe, unsurveyed and uncharted. We reached our destination without mishap, and were landed on the shoulders of stalwart bluejackets, wading knee-deep in the mud. Mkonumbi boasted of a certain number of huts and sheds constructed by the Company in addition to

the native village. Some six miles inland lay Mkumbi where there were also a few huts and wells which supplied a rather muddy water. Here we established our depot. Messengers from Fumo Omari brought letters saying that he was unwell, and suggesting that I should come to see him. As there was reason to believe that this was only a pretext, I despatched a native orderly of General Mathews to inform him that I was going to Witu, and should expect him there on the fourth day. The chief of another outlaw town, Jongeni, also asked to be invited. An important sheikh of the Wagunia tribe, whose influence was considerable on the coast, marched in with beating drums and a picturesque suite to offer his services.

Tents had been pitched for the naval landing party. As I was visiting the sentry posts at night with Mathews we were startled by a sudden and violent outburst of some of the choicest language I have heard from the Marines' tent. The men had turned in some hours before and red ants, attracted by scraps of food which they had thrown into the grass after supper, had paid them a visit. In a moment these ferocious little pests were all over them nipping the flesh with their formidable pincers, resembling the claws of a miniature stag beetle, which produce a violent irritation. Having failed to tuck my pyjamas into my stockings, I was also attacked to some extent. We had to light our lanterns, strip and pick them off one by one.

With Mathews, Commander Lindley, and an escort of twenty-five Marines and bluejackets, I started for Witu, some twenty-two miles distant. As long marches were undesirable in the steamy tropical climate, we bivouacked one night on the road. Nearly all the country traversed, which was particularly adapted for growing rice, had once been under cultivation, but was then abandoned owing to the raids of the forest outlaws. The coarse yellow grass was everywhere shoulder high, but occasional clumps of mango trees marked the sites of the



deserted farms. In the immediate neighbourhood of Witu cultivation reappeared. Nowhere else where I have been in Africa were mosquitoes so numerous or so persistent. Even when all the flesh was covered, we found that they drove a penetrating proboscis through our khaki breeches where the material was tightly strained over the interstices in the Company's cane-bottomed chairs. The naval escort could only sleep in the lee of a smoky fire. We were to pay the penalty before long for our ignorance of the mosquito's virus-carrying potentiality.

There I received a letter from Fumo Omari announcing that he would come if some donkeys could be sent for him to ride. As he was physically deformed, four were procured and despatched. He also asked for a flag to hoist in token of submission. But Mathews' orderly returned with the information that, after a consultation with the chief of Jongeni, he had decided not to leave his stronghold, and pleaded fear as his excuse. I then wrote him a further letter telling him that after I had promised him hospitality and security in the name of my Government and of the Sultan of Zanzibar, I could not accept his plea. He had given many undertakings in the past which had never been observed. As, however, I was ready to offer him every chance of reconciliation I should come myself to hoist the flag in Pumwani. I would meet him outside the town, but with a strong guard, and if we were attacked when we came in peace, he and his people would be driven from the land. Meanwhile information from native sources showed that the outlaws were busy building stockades to cover all the approaches to their settlements. As it therefore appeared probable that they would attack us, and the timber defences were reported to be very strong, H.M.S. *Sparrow* was sent back to Zanzibar to bring a field gun which the flagship had promised to furnish should it be required.

On the 31st July the Company's flag was hauled down at Witu, and the flag of the Protectorate, the red Zanzibar

flag with a small union jack in the centre, was hoisted in its place, the native troops and naval escort presenting arms. A proclamation declaring the new status was read in English and Swaheli. I had taken over two valuable officers from the Company, Mr. A. S. Rogers, of the Punjab police, who had been in charge at Lamu and in command of the Sepoys. He was now appointed administrator ; while Mr. Bird Thompson, who had been very successful in managing natives, became assistant administrator. Rogers, who had once been as far as Jongeni, was to accompany us to Pumwani. As the direct road from Witu lay through dense bush or forest and was reported to be blocked, I decided to return to Mkumbi and advance from there. It was very fortunate for us that we did so. We were already on the way back when Fumo Omari's reply to my last letter arrived. It was a curious mixture of defiance and submissiveness, and with it came a message that he would only allow five persons to enter the town. I briefly replied recommending him to receive us hospitably and pointing out that, having accepted the flag, he could not keep his gate closed to the officers of the Government.

By the evening of the 5th of August the field gun had been brought up to our camp at Mkumbi. The landing parties from the *Blanche*, *Swallow* and *Sparrow*, numbering in all 160 men, were divided into four companies of bluejackets and one of Marines. A party from the *Sparrow* was in charge of the gun, to drag which through the long grass was exhausting work for seventy porters in two shifts of thirty-five. The evening before we started for our two days' march to Pumwani an ox was killed for the messes and, to ensure fair distribution Mathews, the Grand Vizir, himself undertook the functions of butcher. He reserved the hump for the officers. That remarkable man had already reduced his army of porters, numbering over three hundred, to perfect order and discipline.

On the morning of the 6th, Hatch led the way with forty Soudanese and forty Zanzibaris. The remainder of the



indigenous troops had been left on garrison duty at Witu and Mkumbi. Rogers was at the head of the column as guide. I was in the centre with Commander Lindley, the Marines and the bulk of the bluejackets. Then came the porters with stores and ammunition, the gun and the doctor's party. Commander Sampson of the *Swallow* was in charge of the rearguard. We could only march in single file along a narrow track through the tall grass, and our line must have extended over half a mile. From time to time the word *Siafu* was passed back from the leaders, which meant that an army of red ants was crossing the trail. Woe betide the man who should put his foot down on that moving ribbon of brown. At four o'clock we bivouacked for the night in open ground surrounded by dense forest near some pools of water. Our native guides reported that we were then two or three hours from Pumwani. Some rain fell in the evening, and the handy-man, who was thoroughly enjoying himself, built us little huts of green branches, which kept us fairly dry.

At 4.30 a.m. we were up again and resumed the march at about 6. It was a Sunday morning. A little further on, to the right, a path diverged towards Jongeni, and up to this point Rogers had known the ground. Here some half dozen shots were fired in our direction, which took no effect and may have been signals. I had given instructions to ignore stray shots on the road. Only if the advance were seriously threatened the officer at the head of the column had discretion to reply. On approaching Pumwani we were to halt in order to ascertain whether the outlaws intended to treat. But if we were deliberately attacked the naval and military officers were to take charge without further consultation.

It grew oppressively hot and when we traversed swampy ground it was almost beyond the power of human resistance to refrain from scooping up the muddy water in one's hands to drink. The water bottles had to be kept full for later emergencies. There were occasional shots from the

bush as we pressed on through a wide passage of grass walled in on either side by forest. One could plainly hear the bullets snarling overhead, but we saw no trace of a human being. Only a few big grey baboons, scared by the firing, swung themselves from branch to branch of the trees to our left. After some two and a half hours' march we crossed an extensive swamp and came to a wide open area of cultivated ground surrounded by a ring of forest, through which, we were informed, at some point unseen a tunnelled road led to Pumwani. As the head of the column reached the millet fields a heavy fire was encountered from an invisible enemy. It was therefore clear that the outlaws meant fighting, so swiftly advancing in the direction of the fire we left the porters in a more or less sheltered spot and found, beyond a banana plantation which had obscured our view of the forest edge, a clear open space across which we could see a cutting in the jungle wall, which bound together by creeping plants was itself practically impenetrable. From all along this green wall a determined fire opened, but not a man could be seen. As we subsequently discovered, the edge of the forest was lined with stockaded rifle pits carefully concealed. The loopholes in the stockade were so constructed as to command the approaches over rather higher ground from Witu, and had we arrived by that road we should have suffered much more severely than we did. As we came up at right angles to the Witu track and close up to the stockades we got off fairly easily, most of the bullets passing over our heads. Volleys from our whole line, directed to the pathway and the forest wall on either side, had no effect in checking the fire. There were, moreover, other rifle pits on our flank and we now found ourselves in rather a hot corner. As soon as possible, therefore, the gun was brought into position near the entrance to the lane up which, some fifty or sixty yards distant, we could plainly see the gate of Pumwani, built of tree trunks, with heavy cross beams, blocking a small triangular postern. Unfortunately the shells from our nine-pounder had no



apparent effect on the solid timbers of the gate. Rocket tubes were then mounted, and their formidable fiery projectiles were discharged into the village and the stockades in so far as they could be localized. Lieutenants Fitzmaurice (now Admiral Fitzmaurice) and Gervis were both wounded in front of the lane, where Commander Lindley was directing operations, and a good many other casualties were brought to the doctor's station, near which I was watching events, feeling rather useless now that the naval and military officers had taken charge, and somewhat preoccupied as to whether our force was adequately equipped for what seemed likely to prove a formidable undertaking. I have no hesitation in admitting that my first experience of being under fire was every bit as disagreeable as I could have anticipated. Bullets pinged into the soft banana stems round us or plunked into the earth, and I heard Fitzmaurice, who was sitting by me with a useless arm, observe "that one was pretty near you." For an hour or so while I had no definite duties to perform I reflected, as I smoked my pipe, that I had a pretty heavy responsibility on my shoulders.

It became evident that the only course to take in order to silence the fire of a concealed enemy was to enter the forest town by forcing the gate. Commander Lindley therefore directed Lieutenants Molteno and Doubble to charge up the lane with their companies while behind them the gun was dragged in nearer to the gate. A shot was fired from fairly close quarters and under cover of the smoke Mr. Kelsey, the boatswain of the *Blanche*, ran forward and inserted a big charge of gun-cotton between the timbers, lit his fuse and withdrew again, happily in safety. A few breathless moments passed and then with the explosion the heavy beams parted and fell, making a break through which the bluejackets rushed. Firing ceased at once from the forest wall and only continued from some stockades on our flanks, which were eventually carried by Hatch with his black troops and the naval skirmishers and Marines under Lieutenant Hutchison. As we streamed into the

town all the outlaws escaped, carrying their killed and wounded with them by narrow paths cut through the jungle, which we were only later able to explore. There was not a soul in Pumwani. The attack had begun about 8.30, and the last firing ceased at 10.30. Our casualties were two killed, a stoker from the *Blanche* and a Zanzibar soldier, with fifteen wounded, nine of whom belonged to the naval brigade.

As soon as we had established ourselves in the abandoned town and made the wounded comfortable on native beds, the naval units faithful to tradition were paraded for church and Captain Lindley, producing a prayer-book from his pocket, read the morning service. It so happened that the first psalm for the day was the one beginning: "Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered." Then we held a council at which it was decided that Pumwani must be destroyed. A proclamation would be affixed in a conspicuous spot announcing that all who came in to Witu to surrender would receive a pardon and that provision would be made for them there. The town, which consisted of the wattle and daub huts with thatched roofs familiar along the African coast, was well constructed in its nest of forest clearing, and the ungrateful task of burning down so much human effort was deferred. We were all fairly tired and glad of a peaceful Sunday afternoon and a long siesta.

As soon as it was dark I went with Lindley to a quiet spot where graves had been dug for the two men who had fallen. He read the burial service and their bodies, wrapped round with grass mats which we found in the huts, were let down into the earth and covered up, with no mound to mark the spot and tempt eventual desecration. The cooks were at work and the fires burning gaily. We had found chickens, melons and green corn in abundance, so that there was wherewithal to provide for every mess. That night the African town, into which no white man had ever penetrated before, harboured an entirely new population. Among our stores we discovered a few bottles of whisky and



a lemon. With these, a few lumps of sugar and a small bunch of red peppers which grew abundantly at Pumwani, we brewed a tropical punch to celebrate the occasion. The men assembled for a sing-song, and I made them a little speech, thanking them for their gallant behaviour and promising to do anything in my power for them should occasion arise thereafter. I have from time to time renewed touch with not a few.

The next day some of the jungle lanes were explored for a certain distance and a second village was found, also abandoned. And here a remarkable episode occurred. The entrance was through a similar timbered gate which it was considered advisable to destroy with gun-cotton. The boatswain had inserted his charge and lit his fuse, when there appeared over the top of the pile the jolly laughing face of a bluejacket who had found his way in by some other path and had clambered up from the inside. In the second or two remaining he could never have got clear, and those who were watching at a respectful distance held their breath in a horror of anticipation. But the "little cherub that sits up aloft" was good to Jack. The fuse missed fire. He lived to tell the tale, but I believe the boatswain was reprimanded for having used a defective fuse.

The stockades were destroyed and their material prepared for firing. Thatch from the houses was spread along both sides of the forest road and sprinkled with the kerosene found in the village so as to burn out a wide approach and make the site unavailable for further defence. The porters from Lamu took a particular pleasure in cutting down the millet and destroying the crops of their arch enemies. To me it was a hateful business. Most of our wounded were doing well. Only the case of one of the Soudanese seemed quite hopeless. A big bullet which passed through him tore such a wide hole on issuing from his back that a considerable proportion of his internal economy was bulging through. The surgeons, who were ably assisted by Dr. Rae from Lamu, did their best for him, washing and replacing

the exposed sections. Incredible as it seemed, the worthy Feragi was back in the ranks in about a month. I saw later in Abyssinia an even more extraordinary case of recuperative power in the native whose constitution has not been enervated by civilization. The following morning we marched out, carrying the more seriously wounded on native beds. Then the town was fired and the lane which had given so much trouble became an avenue of flame. We marched down in one day to the base at Mkumbi unmolested, which proved that the outlaws, who it was presumed had taken refuge in Jongeni, had no inclination to face us in the open. Though the inhabitants of that place had been among the worst offenders and the Sheikh had been playing a double game, I felt bound if possible to avoid further hostilities and with some difficulty procured a man from the coast who, having relations in the town, was willing to bear a letter there, in which I announced to the Sheikh my intention of visiting him and warned him to keep the peace and avoid the fate of Pumwani.

Two clear days were suffered to elapse, during which the messenger did not return. So we reluctantly took the old road once more, and bivouacked in the same spot. Soon after nightfall some shots were fired into our camp which, as they were not followed up, I assumed to be an answer to my letter. The next morning at six we started for Jongeni, and this time we were continually subjected to intermittent firing from the bush. Rogers led us very skilfully, making a detour through a marsh, so as to interpose some high ground between us and the entrance to the town until we were only two or three hundred yards from the gate. Our former experience served us in good stead and, forming under cover before crossing the open ground, Hatch and the Nubians carried a strong stockade flanking the lane up which the naval contingent charged. The ever ready boatswain of the *Blanche* then planted his charge of cotton and adjusted his fuse. We entered Jongeni within an hour of the time when firing in earnest began. Mathews was struck by



a glancing shot which was diverted by his shoulder-strap, and he fortunately escaped with nothing worse than a big bruise. Our casualties were confined to two of the naval brigade and two Nubians wounded. The procedure followed at Pumwani was repeated here, and on the 14th we returned to our base.

The next morning I marched down to the coast at Mkonumbi in record time to despatch my report. A Marine of the escort fell out on the march from heat apoplexy. He was wearing the regulation helmet, whereas the bluejackets who had nothing but their straw hats, into which they stuffed a few leaves, seemed impervious to the sun. In the course of that day the messenger whom we had despatched to Jongeni on the 11th, came in, half starved and in a highly nervous condition. Fumo Omari, who was in hiding in the forest, had ordered him to be executed, but his relatives in Jongeni had enabled him to escape and he had been wandering about ever since. He told us that the losses at Pumwani had been severe. One of the rockets had exploded a powder store with disastrous effect.

It would have been useless, if it had not been impossible, to pursue the outlaws into the forest. The naval contingent was therefore re-embarked, and I returned to Lamu to spend the next few days in drawing up provisional regulations for the administration of the Protectorate. The Soudanese were established at Mkumbi and 115 Zanzibaris distributed pending further reinforcement, over a line of posts isolating the outlaws.

The story of Witu, which is not yet concluded, has occupied a considerable space in this record, but I believe it has never been told before except in official despatches.

We had been anxious to reward the services of an elderly porter who during the first action had carried water to the gun under a severe fire. He was discovered to be a domestic slave, and his master at Lamu was persuaded to agree to his liberation, very reluctantly indeed because, as he explained, the man was his oldest friend and he did

not wish to break the tie that bound them. A sum of money and a manumission paper were accordingly given to the old fellow. The latter, however, he brought back a few hours later, begging that it might be cancelled, for nothing, he said, would make him leave his master. "Who, if I did," he asked "would look after me when I was ill or provide for me when I was too old to work?"

The last days at Lamu were clouded by a sinister rumour which had reached the coast from Uganda that Raymond Portal had died of fever. It proved, alas, to be true, and letters from Gerry, brought down by Bishop Tucker, confirmed the tragic end of that pattern and flower of a gallant English gentleman, who was indeed, as his brother wrote, "the best of them all."

After a month's absence I returned to Zanzibar. On the way south, as the search-light of the *Blanche* was illuminating the horizon, we detected towards midnight a spot of white which indicated a dhow sailing north. There was a fairly big sea, of which the *Blanche*, a very steady ship in rough weather, took little notice. But the Captain ordered a boat to be lowered, into which a sub-lieuteneant and five men dropped as she rose on the wave. Half the ship's company turned out of their hammocks to watch the adventure. The cockle-shell of a boat, which was instantly lost in the night, had a mile or more to row before reaching the dhow, on which the search-light continued to play. I can imagine no more disagreeable job than that of boarding a pitching dhow at midnight in the middle of the Indian Ocean, and climbing its slippery side with no knowledge of what sort of desperadoes might not be found in possession. But these fine fellows took it all in the night's work as a matter of course. It must have been nearly a couple of hours before they were back in the ship rather disappointed at having found all in order.

I was much gratified to receive in due course a very cordial despatch from Lord Rosebery approving of all that had been done in Witu, both the conduct of the operations and the



measures taken for pacification and administration. But what gave me the greatest pleasure of all was his perception and appreciation of the long and invaluable services of Mathews, whose name he promised to put forward for the first distinction for which it would be in his power to make a recommendation. Mathews, indeed, received the K.C.M.G. the following New Year.

I cannot omit here to pay grateful testimony to the debt which I owed to my chief at the Foreign Office for his constant support and encouragement. Though I was comparatively a junior, he wrote me a number of inspiring letters with his own hand, and he has always remained to me the ideal master to serve.

On the other hand, a foolish little example of red-tape arising out of this expedition annoyed me. I have already referred to the manner in which our consul in Crete had been treated by some minor official in the matter of his accounts after a journey which he was instructed to undertake. I now had a similar experience. When the account for my expenses in Witu was returned, no difficulty was made about refunding the sum due for transport and entertainment on board a war-ship, which was determined by existing rules. But for the period passed on shore when I messed with the other officers the Zanzibar Government had paid the mess-bill. My share was £20, and as I was a British official, I suggested that this amount should be refunded to the Protectorate administration. It was not a large demand to make for the annexation of a new territory. We had lived hard and had not even taken tents to sleep in on the march. A claim on my own account would no doubt have been met. But the reply which I received was that there was no precedent for such a refund to the Zanzibar Government. I ought no doubt to have referred to a higher court. But I felt rather indignant and did not press the matter further. The Treasury, therefore, did not even have to pay £20 for Witu.

All had gone well during my absence. At the end of

July Berkeley, who had been continually ill, came down from Uganda and was invalided home. Soon after my return Colonel Colville arrived in Zanzibar with his staff. He was to proceed to Uganda and take Portal's place when the latter came home to report, at any rate until a definite decision was taken as to the country's future. The equipment of his caravan was no easy matter, owing to the large demands recently made on depleted man power.

The aftermath of our expedition was now to be reaped. One after another the men of the *Blanche* and *Swallow* sickened with malaria. The Commanders of both vessels and the senior lieutenant, Hutchison, went down. Telegrams from Lamu reported the critical illness, and soon afterwards the death, of Dr. Rae, the Company's medical officer, who had marched with us and rendered invaluable service at Pumwani. A little later I fell a victim myself and though I got over this second bout fairly quickly—there was no time to be ill—the recurrent fever never quite left me again and after this attack each new one progressively increased in intensity as the power of resistance weakened.

The two ships remaining on the station—for the *Sparrow* had left—were practically out of action from reduction of their crews, when a fresh crisis arose at Kismayu, where the defensive force improvised by the Company had never been adequate. A fort had been established some distance inland at a place known as Turk's Hill and garrisoned with Kiriboto Arabs. These irregulars had not been judiciously handled and they mutinied. The Ogaden Somalis seized the opportunity to revolt and the officer in charge was assassinated. The Company's stern-wheel steamer on the river Juba was immobilized by a defect in her engines some way up stream with two English engineers on board, and was menaced by the Somalis from either bank. Immediate action was imperative. I consulted Lindley, who was not making a rapid recovery, and he directed Lieutenant Vaughan Lewes, the next senior officer of the *Blanche*, to communicate with me. It was decided to transfer a number of the healthy



ratings from the *Swallow* to the *Blanche* and make up one strong ship's company. I could only give Vaughan Lewes, who sailed at once for Kismayu, general instructions to act according to his best judgment. But I was able to offer him an invaluable guide familiar with the country in Lovatelli, who had just returned from a tour in the interior and who at once volunteered his services. It was a great chance for Vaughan Lewes, who having been in charge of navigation had been left at the base when we landed in Witu, and he acquitted himself splendidly. He marched inland with every available man from his ship, guided by Lovatelli, relieved the beleaguered engineers of the *Kenya*, who had held out against several attacks, and made good the defects in the machinery. The Ogaden villages were then attacked and severely punished. This expedition, which returned without the loss of a man, ensured a period of tranquillity to Kismayu. Lovatelli soon afterwards returned to Italy. He was awarded the C.M.G. for his gallantry. Some years later he once again took part in a British campaign in Somaliland. A good friend, and a first-rate man with whom to go tiger-shooting, he was ready for any adventure and recklessly brave, though deficient in the discipline of self-restraint when his opinion differed from that of his hierarchical superiors, a quality which occasionally got him into trouble at home. He was, in fact, reported once to have kicked a consul on grounds which could not, officially at any rate, be regarded as adequate. But he was one of those to whom deservedly much is pardoned. There was a touch of Cochrane in Giovanni Lovatelli. He achieved post rank, and had not a grim disease carried him off prematurely I am convinced some desperate act of gallantry would have made him famous in the Great War.

After recovering from my second bout of malaria I spent a day or two in one of the half-abandoned palaces in the country which the Sultan placed at my disposal, with Vice-Consul Cave and his plucky wife, in the hope of recuperating. But the fever returned and I had to come back to the Agency.

Our medical officer, Dr. Charlesworth, had himself been very ill, and was suffering from water in the joints, one of the not uncommon after-effects of fever in East Africa. He was consequently obliged to return to Europe and was succeeded by Doctor O'Sullivan, who treated me homoeopathically, rightly no doubt, as quinine had long ceased to have any effect. Mrs. de Sausmarez, the wife of the assistant judge, had died on the way to Aden, having been embarked for home in the hope of saving her life. In Zanzibar itself we had had other losses and every one was continually up and down with the prevailing malady.

Letters received from Gerry Portal led me to believe that he would reach the coast on his return journey by the end of October. He wrote very fully on the rare occasions when an opportunity offered. But the record of his observations and experiences is so fully given in the *Mission to Uganda* that I shall not further dwell upon the results of that expedition. After his return he would have to go to England to submit his report. So that I saw no prospect of relief and sometimes used to wonder how long I should hold out.

A reconnaissance in the Witu country directed by Mathews was carried out by landing parties from the *Blanche*, *Swallow* and *Racoon*, which last had now joined the station, with some of the Zanzibar troops under Hatch and Captain Wake, who had recently entered the Sultan's service. It was ascertained that the system of military posts had been successful in completely isolating the outlaws, who had had no news of the landing. A certain number of them were consequently surprised attempting to rebuild Pumwani. They fled on the approach of the force and themselves set fire to certain smaller villages in the forest, the existence of which had not been surmised until the smoke was seen rising from their conflagration.

It was characteristic of the adventurous spirit of that race which in the beginning of history disputed the commerce of the Mediterranean with the Phoenicians, that within a



week or two of our expedition into No-man's-land, two Greeks had arrived with packs on their backs in the new Soudanese settlement, and had started a modest trade in tobacco, matches, pocket knives and other portable commodities.

Not until after I had left the East Coast was Rogers eventually able to locate the forest settlement in which Fumo Omari and the remnants of his followers had established themselves when driven out of Pumwani and Jongeni. The new village had exactly the same character as the strongholds we had destroyed. With Captain Wake and an exclusively native force he made a night march to the spot and reached the timber gate in the darkness unperceived. As was anticipated, with the first glimmer of morning the cross-beams of the postern were removed to enable the inhabitants to go to the wells just beyond the forest edge. The surprise party seized the moment to emerge from their ambush and rushed the gate. There was a sharp resistance in the forest lane, but Fumo Omari and all his principal adherents were surrounded and captured. Unfortunately Captain Wake was so severely wounded in this plucky raid that his leg had eventually to be amputated.

The outlook was not a bright one on the coast in the later months of 1893. The Company was sending home officers and not replacing them. Garrisons were so attenuated that I was appealed to by the Bishop of Equatorial Africa to take measures for the protection of the ladies at a mission station in the very heart of the Company's territory. Of the Zanzibar troops 150 had gone to Uganda and 150 were in Witu, and we had no more to spare. A second detachment of Sikhs had gone through to Johnston in Nyasaland, but my appeals to be allowed to recruit police in India had been in vain. It was obvious to me that the Chartered Company would before long plead inability to carry on. Great Britain would then be compelled to take over what seemed likely to prove a troublesome inheritance.

There was in certain quarters at home a tendency to

criticize the arrangement by which Witu had been placed for administrative purposes under the Sultan of Zanzibar, since domestic slavery was still recognized in his dominions, whereas the Company had, with a grand gesture but with little regard for the consequences, declared the total abolition of slavery there. It is an easy matter to issue ordinances. To enforce their observance is another story and nothing had been done in this respect when the Company abandoned a region where they had been unable to maintain security. It is also easy for the secretaries of benevolent associations at home to press for the adoption of counsels of perfection. But the hard fact of which they were no doubt blandly unconscious was that at this time we were holding on to East Africa by a very slender thread and preserving it from a worse fate by the faith and the exertions of a mere handful of men.

The burden of responsibility weighed heavily upon me and it was not lightened by constant attacks of malaria, which always recurred to incapacitate me once more just as I had cleared off the arrears of work accumulated during the preceding one. The last and worst of all followed immediately after a great fire in the native suburb of Zanzibar, which destroyed 400 houses. I had gone out while still weak to encourage the local fire brigade. A remarkable feature of this conflagration was the exodus of a large number of snakes which had been concealed in the thatch of the burning huts. From one of these a most gallant rescue of a native woman paralysed by fear was made by Mr. Pordage, of the Public Works Department. He only succeeded on a second attempt and immediately afterwards the roof fell in. When my temperature was very high Dr. O'Sullivan used to put me into a wet sheet and then tuck me up in six or seven blankets which induced perspiration. In about half an hour the temperature would come down from nearly 106 to 102 or less. The process was successful but exhausting, and I felt myself growing continually weaker. One night when I got out of bed I fell on the floor



and was too weak to get into bed again so that I remained there through the rest of the night. There were then no nurses in Zanzibar except the few attached to the Universities' Mission hospital and it was only during an exceptionally bad bout when it seems my condition was considered really serious that I was able to have the advantage of their services for a day or two. My Italian servant, who had kept his health, was most attentive, but at moments when all one's nerves were tense he used, like the zealous friend in Browning's poem, nearly to drive me mad with "the creaking of his clumsy boots." Fortunately for me the ice-machine did not break down while I was at my worst, for the aching of the head in African fever is almost unendurable and the ice-bag offers the only alleviation. When the temperature has subsided the ensuing stage is almost as disagreeable. Incessant violent perspirations drench pyjamas and bed and seem to carry away the last remnants of vitality. These bring on prickly heat, and that is the last infirmity of the much-tried body. But I never felt the least like giving in and when towards the end of October I heard that Portal and Rhodes had arrived by the Tana at Lamu the news gave me a fresh lease of life.

A day or two later—it was the 22nd of October—Gerry walked into my bedroom with a smiling face. The *Swallow* had brought him to Zanzibar. There was any amount to tell on both sides, but I was still so weak on that day that the doctor would only sanction a short conversation. All had gone well with them on the downward journey except that Frankie Rhodes and Hutchison, Portal's servant, had had chronic fever for some time past, and that about a week before they reached Lamu, Gerry had lost all his trophies, his rifle and his bed, owing to the capsizing of a canoe in the Tana river. He had also had some fever, but not of a serious character, and looked extraordinarily well. It was good to see him again.

Without informing me Portal telegraphed to the Foreign Office that my condition was such as to necessitate an imme-

ciate return to Europe and that he proposed that I should leave with him by the next boat in twelve days' time, leaving the judge in temporary charge. I no doubt owed him my life, as I should never have asked to be relieved myself and it seems that in my very weak condition I could not have resisted any more attacks of malaria. A few days later I managed to get up and pull myself together sufficiently to wind up certain current affairs.

By the 1st of November I was fairly convalescent, and was able to assist Portal in receiving a deputation from the Khojah and Banyan community who came to congratulate him on his safe return and to take their leave of me. A deputation from the Parsees followed and all day long there were visits from my friends, including Tippoo Tib, Stanley's old enemy, who now lived in Zanzibar and posed as a philanthropist. Though accepted by the community as a pure Arab, he was strongly negroid in type, being the son of a negro mother. We avoided talking of Stanley. Among my other visitors was Seyyid Khaled, whom I had arrested on the night of the Sultan's accession. He came in without taking off his shoes at the door of the reception room, an act of discourtesy in an Arab which would be equivalent to entering a drawing-room in Europe with one's hat on. I only looked at his feet. But when he had left I sent him a message to say that unless he made ample apology he would never be admitted into the Queen's house again. He excused himself on the ground of nervousness, but in view of his previous and subsequent record there can be little doubt his action was deliberate. That evening I was entertained at a farewell dinner at the English club, which was presided over by the judge. They were all good friends, the fellow countrymen with whom I had been in daily association at this distant outpost, but I was almost overcome by the kind things that were said, and not least by Gerry Portal himself. A memorable incident was the reading of a telegram by Frankie Rhodes, who responded to the toast of "The Army," which he had just received from his brother



announcing the capture of Bulawayo and the flight of Lobengula.

It remained to take leave of the Sultan, for whom longer experience had only increased my regard. I was informed that he wished to present me with a sword of honour with a jewelled handle similar to a valuable weapon which he had given to Mathews. This, however, I had to beg him not to do. On the other hand if it were merely a simple sword of no intrinsic value I should highly esteem it as a remembrance of himself. Accordingly at the farewell interview he offered me an Arab sword with a fine old blade which I have always valued for the sake of the giver, who, like his predecessors, was short lived. I also became the possessor of a small bottle of attar of roses, which I am afraid I did not value so highly and gave away as soon as I reached Europe, but not before all the contents of my portmanteau were impregnated with the penetrating scent. Mathews, who was the most generous of men, insisted on my carrying away what is now one of the most precious of my treasures, a silver-mounted pipe which had belonged to the Shereef of Mecca.

Three days later we left for Europe in the Messageries S.S. *Sindh*. The members of the Zanzibar Government rowed us to the ship, General Mathews himself pulling stroke. Every one in Zanzibar was on board, but nothing moved me more than taking leave of Mathews. Though we continued to correspond I never saw my old friend again, as he did not return to Europe before his death, in 1901, from a particularly pernicious form of malaria, which affected the nerve centres. He was then only fifty-one.

The end of this great Englishman, who had given twenty-six years of his life to Zanzibar and the mainland, only twice returning home in that long period, was characteristic of his straight and beneficent life. The son of the reigning Sultan watched by his bed through the last night, and he died surrounded by devoted friends, including his nephew, Sir Basil Cave, so that all that passed was recorded. In a

long period of delirium he seems to have re-lived the main events of his stirring life. He was heard at one moment to give orders to the crew of his cutter as he used to do in the days of cruising after slave-raiders, in which he had greatly distinguished himself. He fought all his many battles on the mainland once again. He recalled his old friends by name. He dealt in dreams with claims and appeals for justice of Arab and slave, and then, reviving a memory of some one of his many kindly offices he murmured: "Call the children! Give them all they want. Let everything be bright and joyous." Later he was overheard to say, this time no doubt in a fleeting moment of consciousness: "We have improved the place very much: public drunkenness is hardly ever seen." On the morning of the day he died there was a brief interval during which his mind was perfectly clear and with a calm voice he bade those present good-bye in these simple words: "God grant that we may all meet some day in the next world and renew our friendship and part no more—I am sorry to leave you, for I have loved you all here. I may have been a bit rough sometimes, but I have loved you all.—The Spirit of God!"

The rest is silence. Soon after his temperature rose to 107·8, but the strong heart still resisted. Three hours later he was dead.

The hard life of African adventure has bred many heroic figures, but of some it has also upset the mental balance and strained the quality of mercy. Few men can boast so clean a record as was his. Sailor and soldier and vizir, he was of the fibre of those simple God-fearing mariners of the great days who laid the foundations of empire, a John Davis or a Captain Cook. If few of his own countrymen had had the opportunity of appraising him, no one was ever more sincerely mourned by those of alien race and dusky skin. I had always resolved that if ever I should have the opportunity of placing on record my experience of many lands and men I would there pay my tribute of affection and regard to one of the best and the bravest and most lovable of



friends and a great servant of his country. For him too the lamp of memory burns on the night of All Souls.

And so the good ship *Sindh* bore us away from the land of gloom and gleam. Rhodes had a rather sharp relapse and I also spent a good deal of time in my berth with intermittent fever. After Aden, however, we both began to feel better, and I was able to write up my concluding despatches. Portal was busy with his book and his official report. Here also I read the last pencil notes of Raymond's diary, the record of a desperate fortnight when porters carried him down from the Toru country, whither he had been sent to recruit men, back to Kampala to die. There is a tragic pathos in one of the last entries: "Thank goodness my Shakespeare returned. No more setting myself impossible algebra sums." It is a grim story that of the pioneers of empire when, as seldom happens, the details of their hard fight with circumstance become known. Of the men with whom I was associated in Zanzibar and East Africa, but few survived for many years, as I have yet to tell.

Rhodes went on to Marseilles, while Portal and I disembarked at Suez and ran up to Cairo to stay a day or two with Sir Evelyn and Lady Baring, who made us very welcome at the Agency. We caught another boat to Brindisi, where I parted with Gerry for a short time, as he went straight home, while I counted on spending a week or two in Italy to recuperate before facing the rigour of the northern winter. I spent a peaceful day or two in the Crawfords' villa at Sorrento, but caught a chill driving into Naples, and after a day or two of fever in bed at Rome managed to get home. There the old enemy once more gripped me severely with the added plague of water in the knee which this malady not unfrequently develops. I had, however, the consolation of receiving from my chief a most cordial and flattering despatch, far beyond my deserts, appreciating my services in Zanzibar, and Sir Edward Grey, who was then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, made a special reference to them in his summary of the year's events in the

House of Commons. The first visit which I received in bed was from Gerry Portal, who announced to me that I had been awarded the C.M.G.

As soon as I was able to get about again my first visit was to him. To my surprise and distress I learned that he also had fallen ill, was, in fact, too ill to see anyone. Having been ordered out of London immediately I left the following day for Cornwall, not apprehending at the time that his illness was more than a relapse of African fever. Not many days later the crushing news reached me of his death. It had been typhoid and not malaria. With him passed away not only a dear friend but a man of action of infinite promise, who barely half way through life had reached a point at which many might consider themselves fortunate to end. The elder brother, Raymond, had no luck in life. Gerald Portal's career was brilliantly successful. But there was never a shade of jealousy between them, and impartial death did not discriminate. *Par nobile fratrum!* Who wills may read their record on the monument in Winchester Cathedral designed by Waldo Story, an old Eton friend, which those who cared for them erected to their memory.

Not long afterwards Lord Rosebery wrote me a most kind letter telling me that it had been his wish to appoint me permanently to take Portal's place, but that the verdict of the medical authorities who had been consulted was so decidedly against my returning that he would not ask me to do so, but hoped to find me some other active work before long. As soon as I was convalescent, therefore, I returned to my post at Paris, where I was most cordially welcomed by my old chief, who despatched me on a mission to consider the redistribution of the consular districts in France on more practical lines. Beginning at Bordeaux and going on through La Rochelle and the then new port at La Salice, I reached Nantes, where I received a telegram recalling me immediately to London.

There I learned that I was to go in May to Cairo to be second in command to Lord Cromer, as he had now become.



From a letter which I received from him soon afterwards it appeared that he had had the same idea as the Secretary of State and had asked for my appointment as soon as Arthur Hardinge had been instructed to go to Zanzibar. In the meanwhile I was to be sent on an interesting and highly confidential mission. Two days after my arrival I dined with Lord Rosebery on a somewhat memorable occasion. Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were there, Lord Morley, Mr. Asquith, the party whips and one or two more. Mr. Gladstone's sight was failing, and he was on the point of resigning. This little dinner celebrated the falling of the mantle on Lord Rosebery. Needless to say Sir William Harcourt was not there. Harry Cust had predicted the resignation a month earlier in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and was roundly abused in the press for his presumption. A few days later they were all apologizing. Except for the failure of sight, which eventually entailed an operation for cataract, Mr. G. was in excellent spirits. He was very indignant at that time with the bishops for their attitude in the House of Lords. He said that in former times he had never considered the political side in making ecclesiastical appointments, but of late he had had reason to do so and he added "quite rightly too." The following day I went to dine and sleep at Windsor, where the Empress Frederick was staying.

There is no longer any need to preserve secrecy regarding the mission which I was now called upon to undertake. Indeed, though my modest share in them did not become public, the results were announced in the following May (1894). I was to go to Brussels and there endeavour to see the King of the Belgians, with the object of obtaining from the Congo Free State the lease of a corridor or strip of territory connecting Lake Tanganyika with Uganda. This would ensure an eventual exclusively British highway connecting the Cape with the Nile and the road to Cairo. In return we were ready to come to terms over certain boundary questions and assure the Free State access to Lake Albert Edward.

To make my movements less obvious I first paid a visit to the Malets at Berlin, where I spent several pleasant days. It was on this occasion that the Emperor, driving down the Linden, nodded to me in so friendly a manner that I concluded that the incident of the book had been entirely forgotten. It was suggested to me by my friend, Princess Henckel v. Donnersmarck, that I should consult a doctor who had a great reputation for treating malarial subjects. It could do no harm and would only cost twenty marks. I took her advice. This doctor, whose name I have forgotten, gave me a prescription which involved the swallowing of some drops contained in little phials for three months in succession, during which period all acids such as lemon, vinegar, etc., were to be avoided. I have never had any return of malaria since. Whether this happy result was due to the treatment or to the natural process of a vigorous constitution rejecting poison in the blood I cannot say.

Another experience of this visit was of a less agreeable character. I paid a visit at the Foreign Office to Baron Richthofen, an acquaintance of my Berlin times, who was Under-Secretary of State in charge of African questions. We had been discussing certain matters of mutual interest, when Richthofen, patting a pile of papers which lay before him, said with a smile which grated on me that they concerned a little arrangement which they had just entered into with France, which he apprehended would not be very welcome to my Government. It certainly was not. The conclusion of that particular agreement was one item in a long list of unfriendly acts towards us of which Germany was at this time deliberately guilty. We were in those days of marked hostility from France anxious to exclude her from the Upper Niger. The same objection was not entertained towards Germany, our differences with whom were, it was still assumed, transitory and remediable. By a recent territorial negotiation we had accordingly given Germany that access to the Niger to which she professed to attach importance. Almost immediately after the conclusion of



those negotiations Germany handed over this territory to France in exchange for concessions elsewhere. Nor was any attempt made to disguise the fact that this almost provocative procedure was intended to remind us that it would be opportune to show more deference to German interests. Bismarck had used Egypt for this purpose, as it was indeed to be used again, but in this instance his successors had gone a long way further, and only in February Baron Marschall had contradicted the report that Germany had ceded a port on the Benue to France.

At Brussels I endeavoured, without in any way compromising our Legation, to obtain an interview with the King through the Minister, Baron Lambermont, whom I had known at the Berlin Conference. That astute and farsighted monarch was at that time not very popular in England, where his administration of the Congo State was the subject of somewhat acrimonious criticism, which in the light of later experience there is good reason to believe was due in great measure to inspiration from Berlin. Should the King of the Belgians, or Belgium itself as his heir, ever seek to be disburdened of the responsibilities undertaken on the Congo, a possibility which did not then seem altogether excluded, the reversion of those territories was secured to France, which had only withdrawn certain priority claims in favour of the Free State. But there is little doubt that Germany contemplated an ultimate extension of her colonial system over the Congo Basin. Her first interest therefore was to get rid of the Belgian interest with its international guarantee. From France it would be easier to wrest a mighty empire in Africa after the next inevitable war, when she counted on being able to dictate the terms of peace. It never occurred to the sentimental people at home who grew hysterical over the alleged infamies of the rubber collection that they were in reality working *pour le roi de Prusse*.

I was, therefore, not very sure of a warm reception. But I was anxious to meet a sovereign of great conceptions who

had done so much for Belgium and his capital. Unfortunately His Majesty was unable to see anyone, having just met with an accident. He had, in fact, I was informed, been precipitated from a bicycle into a rose plantation, and this had entailed some temporary disfigurement. I was, however, referred to the Secretary-General of the Free State Administration. Matters did not progress badly and I was able in a few days to return to London with a tentative basis of agreement which led to negotiations in London between M. van Etvelde, the Secretary-General, and the Foreign Office.

When the agreement was eventually signed and published, although it involved no cession of territory, violent opposition was raised to its terms in France, with whom Germany, whose East African colony would have become coterminous with the corridor, joined hands. A menacing attitude was adopted towards King Leopold with the result that the clauses dealing with the lease were cancelled. Once more time's revenges have enabled the corridor to be established a little further east.

Lord Kimberley had now become Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs under the Premiership of Lord Rosebery, and as I remained for some two months longer at home working at the East African problem at the Foreign Office, I was enabled to see something of my new chief. While professing to be most anxious to obtain information he was equally zealous in imparting it. One night after dinner at the house of his son and private secretary, Armine Wodehouse, he took me aside to a sofa and invited me to sit down and tell him all about East Africa. I was ready enough to do so, but found little opportunity, as he talked almost without drawing breath for the whole of the hour available, at the end of which he said: "Now I must go, but I am indebted to you for a most interesting conversation."

Gerald Portal had completed about half of a book describing his experiences in Uganda. I was invited to prepare these chapters for the press and to complete the story



of that memorable adventure from his diaries and letters. This occupied my spare time pretty fully, too fully in fact, seeing that towards the end of my stay the great event of my life took place with the realization of the best thing that falls to the lot of man. Lord Cromer had to be relieved in Egypt at the beginning of June, and it seemed hardly advisable to take a bride to Cairo for the summer months. So my marriage was reluctantly postponed until the Autumn. My future wife took the remarkable resolution of practically returning again to school in the neighbourhood of Paris, after many years of emancipation, in order to study French and other subjects connected with coming professional duties. And there I left her in the kind and constant care of Lord Dufferin and started in the middle of May for Egypt, where I was to spend the next eight years.

I had passed my thirty-fifth birthday on the journey home from East Africa, and had every reason to be well satisfied with the variety of my ten years of public service. If it was not quite permissible for me to say, as Sir Walter Raleigh said on the scaffold, "I have been a soldier and a sailor and a courtier, all of which are courses of wickedness and vice," I had at least had experience of a brief phase in the life of each, and now I was about to take up the post which of all others I should have chosen had the choice been in my own hands.

But what befell in Egypt, and afterwards at Stockholm, and at Rome during the Great War, must be reserved for another volume.





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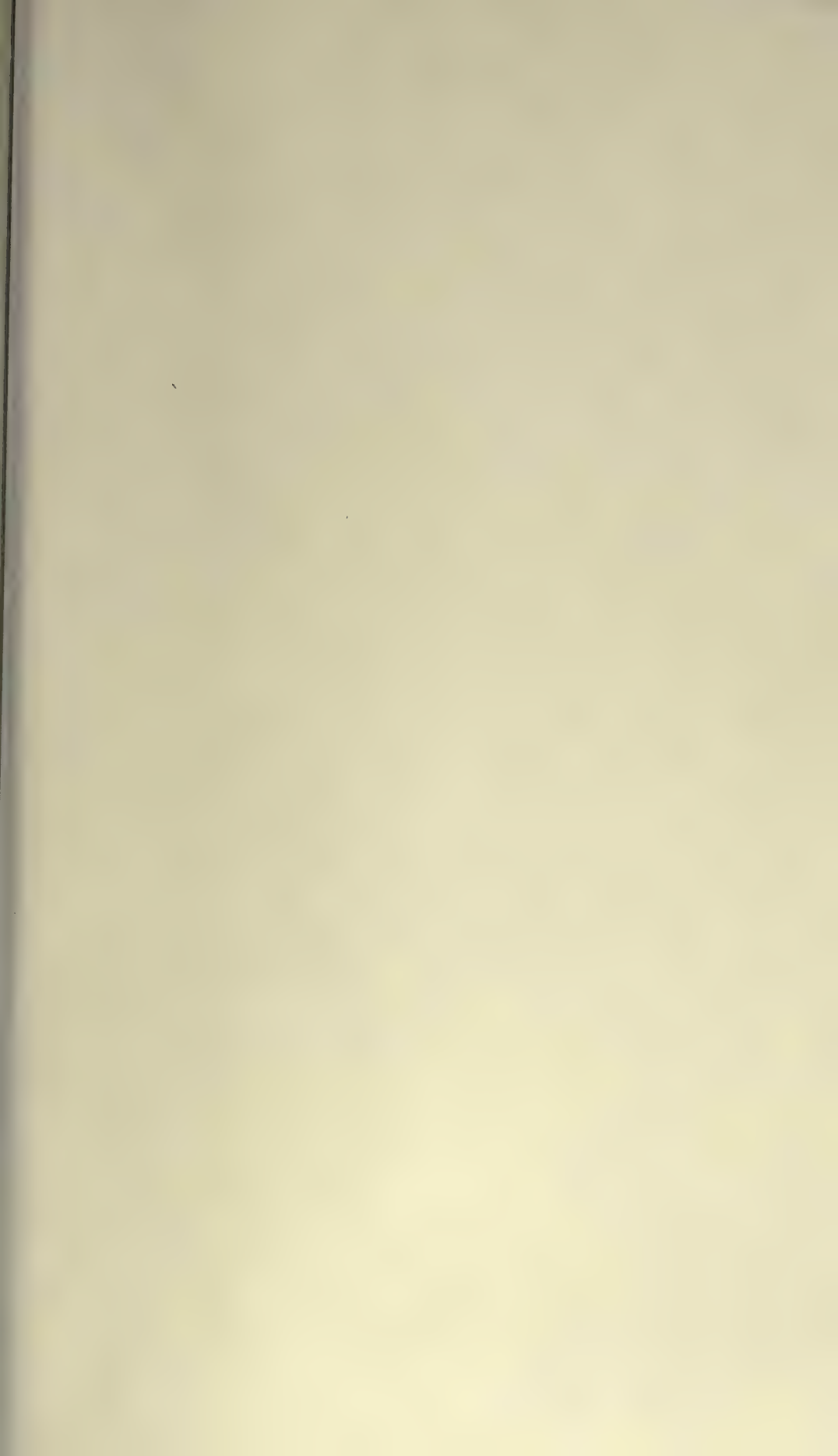
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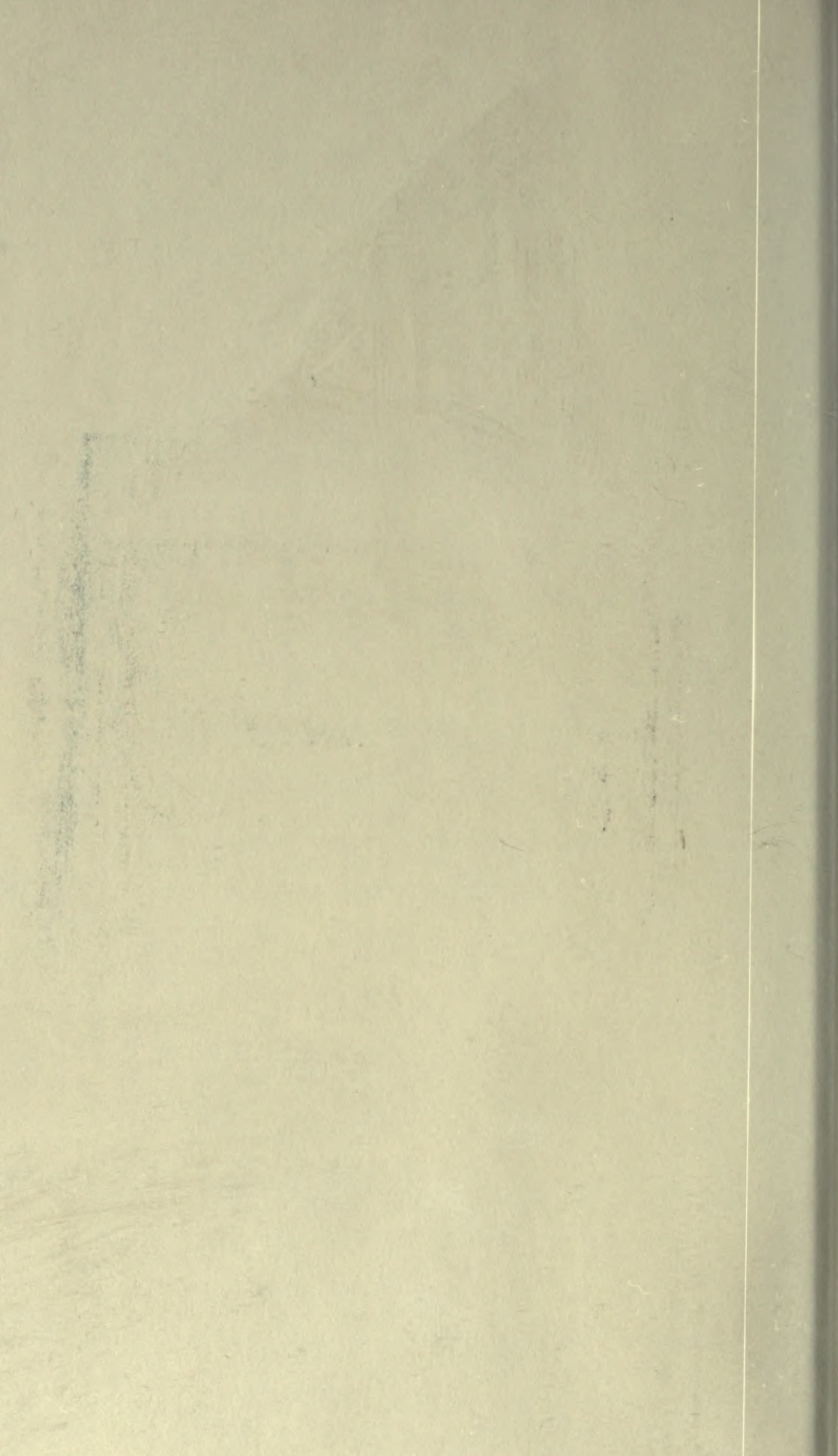














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